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HISTORY OF ST. ROLLOX SCHOOL, GLASGOW.

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HISTORY

OF

ST. ROLLOX SCHOOL, GLASGOW,

1

TOGETHER WITH

MEMORABILIA OF SAME,

AND

*A POETICAL SKETCH OF
THE OLD SCHOOL AND ITS NOTABILITIES.*

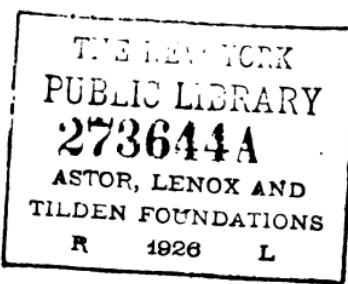
BY HUGH AITKEN DOW,
A FORMER PUPIL.

Printed for Private Circulation by
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1876

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JOSEPH WENDELL
JULIUS
WILHELM

TO

John Tennant, Esq. of St. Rollox,

IN WHOM

THE PUPILS OF ST. ROLLOX SCHOOL

HAVE ALWAYS FOUND

A LIBERAL Benefactor and Steadfast Friend,

THESE PAGES

ARE GRATEFULLY AND RESPECTFULLY INSCRIBED

BY

HUGH A. DOW.

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P R E F A C E.

HE circumstances of the preparation of this History of St. Rollox School are related in the Introduction which precedes it.

To the explanations therein given the Author here begs to add, that the History has been compiled primarily for those who at any period have attended St. Rollox School as pupils, or in other ways have been intimately connected or acquainted with that institution. The circumstance of the book being issued through a public medium is due to a desire not to extend its publication beyond that circle of readers, but to reach that circle as fully as possible.

The Author would here take the opportunity of expressing his obligations and thanks to William Galbraith, Esq. of St. Rollox, for the substantial assistance given by him in the matter of the publication of this book, and to Messrs. John Donald, William A. Gray, Thomas Duncanson, Robert Black, and Dr. Murdoch Cameron; for the aid so heartily rendered by them.

The Author's special thanks are due to Mr. John P. Young for the admirable illustrations which front the book.

ILLUSTRATIONS.

PORTRAIT OF MR. DONALD.

VIEW OF EXTERIOR OF ST. ROLLOX SCHOOL, CASTLE STREET.

„

„

GAENGAD ROAD.



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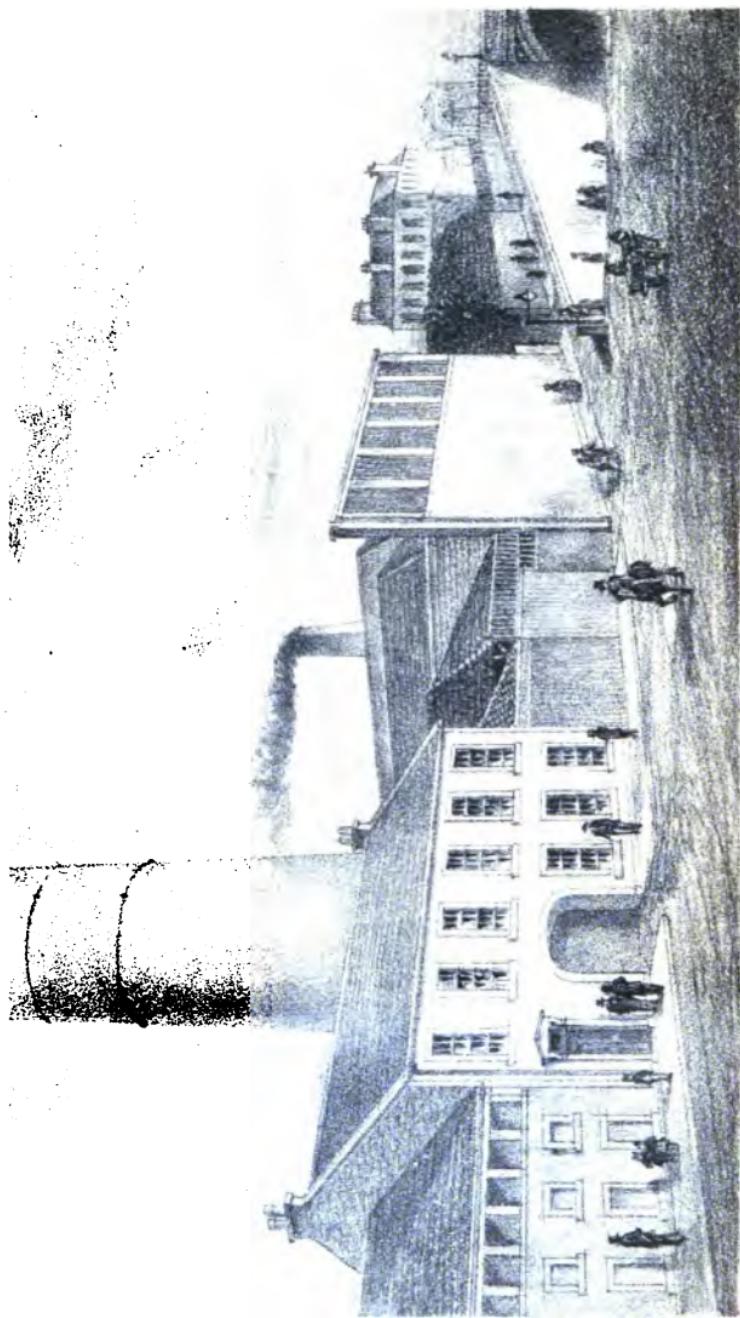
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'ARE we to be eternally ringing the changes upon Marathon and Thermopylæ, and going back to read, in obscure texts of Greek and Latin, of the exemplars of patriotic virtue? We can find them nearer home, in our own country, on our own soil;—strains of the noblest sentiment that ever swelled in the breast of man are breathing to us out of every page of our country's history, in the native eloquence of our mother tongue. Here we ought to go for our instruction; the lesson is plain, it is clear, it is applicable. When we go to ancient history we are bewildered with the difference of manners and institutions. . . .

'I do not mean that these examples are to destroy the interest with which we read the history of ancient times; they possibly increase the interest by the very contrast they exhibit; but they do warn us, if we need the warning, to seek our great practical lessons. . . . at home; out of the exploits and sacrifices of which our own country is the theatre; out of the characters of our own fathers. Them we know. . . .'

—EVERETT *On National Character.*

HISTORY OF ST. ROLLOX SCHOOL, GLASGOW.



"THE OLD SCHOOL," CASTLE STREET ST ROLLOX.



ST. ROLLOX SCHOOL, GARNGAD ROAD.



INTRODUCTION.

THAT has been remarked, curiously enough, with reference to the distinctive characteristics of the respective nationalities in the United Kingdom (*not* England), that 'an Englishman is never happy but when he is miserable, a Scotchman is never at home but when he is abroad, and an Irishman is never at peace but when he is fighting!' The apothegm has perhaps its elements of truth, but we think the statement in it relating to Scotchmen indicates more of ignorance than of acquaintance with our peculiar characteristics, and points *inadvertently* to qualities totally different to the one which is inaccurately ascribed to us. For if there is one trait which, more than another, in a Scotchman's character, stands out in bold relief, it is his innate love of his old mother country—with her Highland hills towering aloft in solemn grandeur, their sides browned with the waving heather, and seamed with linns leaping in silvery spray from the desolate regions above, where birds of prey find their eyries,—with her peaceful hamlets nestling within the kindly shelter of woods or at the base of some gentle declivity,—with her crowded cities, where the teeming

population bear witness in their grave demeanour and aspects to how very real, how very earnest are the lives they lead. And no distance, no lapse of time impairs this love of country—these indeed rather strengthen than weaken this sentiment.

It is in this way that, go where he will, a Scotchman always leaves his heart behind him ; and surely we would not speak of such an one being most at home, if—when we saw him abroad and marked the steady, strenuous efforts made by him from day to day, from month to month, from weary year to weary year, through which efforts he rose perhaps to be President of a great Republic, or Premier of a vast Dominion, a Grand Vizier of Turkey, a Viceroy of India, or mayhap, like Lords Clive and Clyde, a saviour of our Empire in that vast country—we yet knew all the while that these successes were held and used by him to a great extent as only means to an end,—that end to find a name and place in some corner or another of his auld mither Scotland ; ay, often only to come home and die in peace !

Nor would we hold those as wholly free from homesickness, who, when struggling beneath the tropical suns of India, China, or any of the many other fields in the East where Scotchmen push their way, are seen to pause in delighted surprise at the sound of words having the true ring of the well-remembered Doric, to drop a big round tear when some of the well-known songs of their childhood unexpectedly salute their ears !

In a richly-furnished apartment of a palatial residence in Italy, a Laplander boy lay dying. From the couch on which he was stretched near the window, he could see the cloudless blue sky of that sunny land,

and through the open lattice he could inhale the delicious odours of a thousand fragrant flowers blooming all around, and breathe the fresh, sweet atmosphere which in that country makes mere existence almost an ecstasy.

The ingenuity of love had sought, literally with tears, to meet his every want, to anticipate his every desire ; and although a mortal disease was sapping away his life, his journey to the tomb was nearly painless. Yet he now moved uneasily, and to the solicitous eyes of the friends who watched him it was apparent he still craved for some last boon. What could it be ? Stooping low to catch his faint whispers, they heard him sigh for ‘ a little snow to lay upon his brow ! ’

Thus in a sense is it, so has it been, and so we trust will it ever be with our fellow countrymen.

‘ Oh ! my heart is sick and heavy—
Southern gales are not for me ;
Though the glens are white in Scotland,
Place me there, and set me free.’

—AYTOUN.

No matter how far away from their native land they may roam, or however bright and inviting the allurements around them, the better part of their hearts still remains home-sick, still instinctively reverts, with a deep craving, to the quiet, placid comforts and enjoyments of that land where their youth was spent, and where, it may be, an aged father and mother—waiting in peace ‘ the glorious to-morrow ’ of their lives—are as weary and heart-sick too for the return of the long absent ones, as nightly on their knees they plead with their God that death may not seal their eyes, nor dull their ears, until they have seen in joy their ‘ wanderin’

bairns,' and heard once more the music of their blythe voices.

A deeply emotional nature is a national characteristic of the Scotch; and although we may, and often do, present to the world in general the aspect of a nature seemingly cold and firm as a rock, smite the rock in the right way, and instantly an avenue to our emotional, almost tearful nature is disclosed, as our human sympathies flow forth. It is perhaps in a greater degree when resident abroad that Scotchmen evince this quality of wearing their hearts upon their sleeves, and rarely indeed does the mask of our nature receive ruder handling than it experiences when some pleasing word or sign, suggestive of the scenes and friends of home, comes to open the prison doors of our stifled, pent-up feelings, bringing relief, not unseldom, in tears.

'Oh! scorn him not!—The strength whereby
 The patriot girds himself to die,—
 The unconquerable power, which fills
 The freeman battling on his hills,—
 These have one fountain, deep and clear,
 The same whence gushed that childlike tear.'

—MRS. HEMANS.

To be sure, if to quit a sterile, rural country, with its every acre in the possession of a small number of wealthy, aristocratic families; or if to leave our densely populated cities, with their overdone competition for even the bare necessities of subsistence, where the 'Song of the Shirt' seems the 'Psalm of Life' to too many; and as often as otherwise, alone, unfriended, ay, not unfrequently, almost penniless, to seek to form a home, a competence, it may be an enviable position in the land of strangers, and, during our efforts towards such an end, to sink all needless regrets and displays

of emotion, to accommodate ourselves for the nonce to the customs and usages of life around us, and, in short, finding ourselves in Rome, ‘to do as the Romans do,’ but, Teutonic like, ever to have before us our Fatherland or Motherland ; we say, if to excel in this respect is to be most at home when abroad, then Scotchmen deserve the compliment assigned them, although it still appears to us, without any disposition to be captious, that if the terms of the maxim are not inaccurate, they are at least too vague.

These remarks have suggested themselves in connection with the preparation of the little volume now in your hands ; indeed, together with another circumstance which we shall mention shortly, they are offered very much as an apology for its preparation.

In common with the proverbially happy nation, St. Rollox School might be said to have no history ; that is, as will soon be apparent to the reader, there is not a great deal in what history it has, beyond what one would expect to find in the story of the existence of almost every similar institution ; and it is only in the belief that the few details given in the short narrative about to follow, and in the subsequent portions of this book, will be acceptable to the former pupils of St. Rollox School—that, in short, anything calculated to serve the purposes of a *souvenir* of the school to the many who received in it the broad and substantial foundations of their education, and who—now scattered far and wide, some of them in different continents of the world—recognise in it the scene of the joyous days of their youth, will be welcomed and treasured by these, our old schoolfellows, that we have been induced to accede to the request of many of these friends to publish the last part of this volume, which appears

under the title of a ‘Poetical Sketch of the Old School and its Notabilities’—and, as an afterthought of these friends, with a view to placing upon record (in a form available to all who might choose to possess themselves of it) the main points in the history of our school, to prepare a short narrative of that history.

The title-page of the last part shows the occasion upon which the sketch of the old school and its notabilities was first given to the world of St. Rollox, viz. at a Re-union Festival of the former pupils of that school. We shall have something to say respecting this Re-union later on, meantime we mention the following as the ‘other circumstance’ accountable for the publication of these pages. At the conclusion of his felicitous address on that occasion, Mr. Donald was pleased to refer to the pleasure he had experienced in listening to the author’s recital of the sketch, and to express the hope that it would be published,—at the same time, he invited the meeting to indicate their acquiescence with his formal motion that such should be done. To this invitation the meeting freely responded, and following their motion came an application, some days later, from the committee of gentlemen who had been instrumental in carrying out the arrangements of the Re-union, requesting the publication of the verses, and a short epitome of the history of the school.

We feel these explanations to be due as much to the reader as to ourselves, for in the absence of the circumstances we have thus indicated we should certainly not have presumed to obtrude ourselves, in this matter, in print on the reading public, even although that public should consist mainly of those for whom we have written, to wit, our old schoolfellows. These

remarks relate especially to the last portion of this book, in designating which we have adhered to the indulgent and flattering description it bore in the programme of the Re-union at which it was first spoken, whereby we have merely sought to associate the lines with the circumstances under which they were read. We are keenly aware of the ephemeral character of, and of the many imperfections which militate against, the sketch; although we find in connection therewith some little of the sympathy of numbers in the reflection, that to construct a 'poetical sketch' of such granitic material as a jumble of proper names and local allusions was a task which proved too much for the gifted author of *Hiawatha*, not to mention in the same breath our humble selves; and in now passing from these explanations, we will only further venture to express the hope that they will serve to modify even the friendly criticisms to which our efforts will probably be subjected.

‘Though absent long,
These forms of beauty have not been to me
As is a landscape to a blind man’s eye :
But oft in lonely rooms, and ’mid the din
Of towns and cities, I have owed to them,
In hours of weariness, sensations sweet,
Felt in the blood, and felt along the heart ;
And passing even into my purer mind,
With tranquil restoration :—feelings, too,
Of unremembered pleasure ; such, perhaps,
As may have had no trivial influence
On that best portion of a good man’s life,
His little, nameless, unremembered acts
Of kindness and of love. Nor less, I trust,
To them I may have owed another gift,
Of aspect more sublime ; that blessed mood,
In which the burthen of the mystery,
In which the heavy and the weary weight

Of all this unintelligible world
 Is lightened ;—that serene and blessed mood,
 In which the affections gently lead us on,—
 Until, the breath of this corporeal frame,
 And even the motion of our human blood,
 Almost suspended, we are laid asleep
 In body, and become a living soul :
 While with an eye made quiet by the power
 Of harmony, and the deep power of joy,
 We see into the life of things.

If this

Be but a vain belief, yet, oh ! how oft—
 In darkness, and amid the many shapes
 Of joyless daylight ; when the fretful stir
 Unprofitable, and the fever of the world,
 Have hung upon the beatings of my heart—
 How oft, in spirit, have I turned to thee,
 O sylvan Wye !'

—WORDSWORTH.

Sylvan Wye!—Little enough that is sylvan surrounds the spot where St. Rollox School now stands, and even less surrounds the building in Castle Street which was the germ of what we warrantably may call the flourishing institution now bearing its well-known name ; but though the pleasure of our associations with any of the scenes of our youth may, in memory, be enhanced by recollections of aught that was agreeable or beautiful in the surroundings of these scenes, that pleasure is not always dependent for its origin or existence on such circumstances being present in the pictures of those scenes which fond memory, in its voiceless reveries, conjures from out its hoards of jealously preserved and varied treasures. Believing this, we therefore believe also, that however uninviting the locality and surroundings of our old and new schools, many have been and will be the longing hearts which have turned to them in memory—to listen again to the

babel of tongues that filled the rooms, to catch here and there, sounding above that babel, the voice of some beloved companion, as listened the village blacksmith :—

‘He hears his daughter’s voice,
Singing in the village choir,
And it makes his heart rejoice.’

—LONGFELLOW.

To look again on some fair face whose witchery was then the theme of our day-dreams, and often in the blissful visions of night lured us on to revel in Elysiums where an eternal June was trailing her robe of flowers, odorous with perfumes and gemmed with sparkling dew-drops, over the enchanted land ; and to join again in the hundred and one little pranks that form the by-play in the more serious part of the rehearsals for the great drama of life.

When we remember this, and that it is asked of us to offer something tending in a degree to enable our former schoolfellows often to revert to such scenes, we are disposed to forget our inability to do full justice to the task assigned us, and to remember, with grateful pleasure, only the honour which is ours in virtue of the task.

It is with such sentiments we offer to our old schoolmates and dear friends all this *memento* of our school and school-days.



ST. ROLLOX SCHOOL, GLASGOW.

ST. ROLLOX is a corruption of the name of St. Roche the Confessor, whose chapel was situated in the common moor on the north side of the city, *near* the place now corruptly called St. Rollox.

St. Roche's chapel is of less remote date than that of St. Mungo (See founded in fifth century, restored or refounded in 1120), having been founded about 1508 by Thomas Mureheid, canon of Glasgow and prebendary of Stobo.

The patronage of the priest or chaplain was vested in the Bailies and Council of the city, with whose consent the benefice was, about 1530, incorporated with the College Church of St. Mary and St. Anne; the chaplain being constituted a canon of that church, but under provision that he should, twice every week, say mass and other offices in St. Roche's chapel for the soul of its founder.

There was a cemetery attached to it, which was used in 1645–6 during the prevalence of the great plague. The wall which surrounded the cemetery—where many persons of distinction were buried—was standing in 1736.

This chapel is said by M'Ure to have belonged to the Black Friars, and served by one of their order.

‘—— “ 1647, 22d May.—Ordains Sein Rokis kirk zaird to be castin about, and ane entrie maid thairto.”
—*Minutes of Town Council.*

‘ In the appendix to *Munimenta Fratrum Predicatorum de Glasgu*, p. 262, Maitland Club, there is a deed of presentation, 1566, Aug. 6th, to John Law, as chaplain to the chapel of St. Roche, successor to Thomas Fleming, signed by James Hammilton, sub-dean and president of the chapter; John Hammyltoun, precentor, etc.; William Hamyltoune of Cambuslang; David Gibsone, from Aire; John Layng, rector of Lus; and Archibald Crauffurd, rector, from Egilschem.’—*John M'Ure alias Campbell's ‘Glasghu Facies.’ Edited by J. F. S. Gordon, D.D.*

It is not to our purpose here to follow the history of St. Rollox, that is, the district called by this corrupted name. We may remark that, in common with most other districts in Glasgow, its growth in extent and population has been very rapid. Even within the past few years it has extended and deepened its ramifications surprisingly. Not many years ago, the areas covered by most of the densely-populated streets east of St. Rollox School in Garngad Road, west of Glebe Street to John Street (north) and Dobbie's Loan, were green fields; mostly all the houses east of the Potteries on Garngad Hill were self-contained, enjoying a delightful amenity from the noise and smoke of the city; and the works now plentifully scattered there had then no existence. The road at the east extremity of Garngad Hill—leading south to the canal, and locally known then as the ‘Jaw Banes,’ from the circumstance of the skeleton of a whale's jaws forming a curious ornament of one of the gardens there, seen overlooking the wall—was a retired and genteel locality,

in which were situated some imposing private residences, all having their own walled gardens. Excepting the corner tenement of Townmill Road, and one or two self-contained residences on the right-hand side of the road going east, all beyond that corner tenement consisted of gardens, orchards, and arable fields, until the mill was reached, where, besides the mill, was a pump well, the water of which was very pure and cold, and was consequently held in high repute by the residents in the district. A walk to the well was an essential part of Sunday's duty, cheerfully performed by the juveniles of the population.

We could, in this way, by multiplying instances of the past features of the district, and comparing these with those now distinctive of it, easily show how rapidly it has grown. In the extent and multiplicity of its industries, and in several other respects, it is very much representative, on a reduced scale, of the city of Glasgow itself, as cursorily described by a Londoner some years since:—‘Placed in the midst of coal and iron fields, Glasgow, from whatever side it is approached, seems surrounded by pillars of smoke by day and of fire by night. It boasts of the tallest chimney-stalks in the world, nearly as high as the Pyramids; and unites in itself the shipping of Liverpool—not, of course, to the same extent—the cotton-spinning of Manchester, the iron-smelting of Middlesbro’, the engineering and iron shipbuilding of the Thames and Tyne, and the coal trade of Newcastle; while the enterprise of its people has made the trout stream on which it stands a river deep enough for the largest sea-going vessels. All which give a wealth which, combined with the numerous stone quarries in the district round it, the love of building in the people, and

the secure tenure of land—from the system of feus or perpetual ground-rents—have induced the people to expend largely in architecture.

'The nucleus of the city has been the Cathedral, built over St. Mungo's holy well, on the banks of the Molendinar; once, doubtless, clear and silvery,—now foetid in odour and hideous in colour from dye-works and the waste heaps of chemical factories. It stands mostly on clay land, in a damp and rainy district; and, in November, with its plenteous coal-smoke, gets up fogs nearly as dense and dirty as London itself can boast of. It is not a healthy city,—death-rate rather high. Notwithstanding that, with an enterprise which London might well imitate, it has brought to itself a magnificent supply of water from Loch Katrine, 30 miles distant. An improvement scheme is in progress for replacing the worst fever dens by wide, open streets.'—*Glasgow and its Cathedral as seen by a London architect, 29th October 1870.*

The educational facilities existing in the locality at the time St. Rollox School was opened are not exactly known to us. We understand that the institution in Garngad Road, generally called by the name of its principal teacher, viz. Thomson's School, was then in existence: another school, conducted by a lady, was also in operation; but our inquiries have failed to elicit the existence of others. *Sic transit gloria mundi.*

St. Rollox School, situated at the north end of Castle Street, was opened in the year 1827, under the mastership of Mr. Walker. It was built chiefly to accommodate the children of those employed in the Chemical Works of Messrs. Charles Tennant & Co., St. Rollox, by which firm the school was owned and maintained; first, in Castle Street, as mentioned, and

subsequently in Garngad Road, until its transfer to the control of the Glasgow School Board in 1874.

Respecting Mr. Walker's career as master of the school, or the condition of the school when under him, we have been unable to glean any information. After holding his appointment at St. Rollox for some time, he emigrated, it is said, to Australia.

Mr. Masterton was the second master. In his youth he had been engaged as a factory worker, and had, probably while so employed, lost his left arm. At the time he became teacher he wore an artificial arm, a circumstance which gave rise to the *soubriquet* 'Corky,' by which he was freely spoken of by the pupils when they were out of doors, and also, in bated breath and with watchful eye, when in school—conduct which shows how little youth is inclined to sympathize with human frailty, weakness, or deformity.

Mr. Masterton has been uniformly spoken of as a good teacher, and his early experiences enabled him to have a fellow feeling for his little pupils, not a few of whom would have been removed, but for his earnest expostulations with the parents, too early from the day school to enter the 'mill,' with its then long, long, weary hours. Unfortunately, Mr. Masterton lost his reason latterly, and on a visit paid to the school by Mr. William Sloan—at that time manager of Messrs. Tennant's works, and who took a deep interest in the school—accompanied by the Rev. Mr. Menzies, it was found that the number of pupils had dwindled away to about twenty.¹

The third incumbent was Mr. Alexander Leck, who

¹ One who met Mr. Masterton frequently in going to and coming from the school, remarked to us: 'I can never forget how solitary he looked upon the street!'

entered upon his duties as master in 1843. He made the office of teacher a stepping-stone to the pulpit—a practice which we conceive must have been hurtful to the improvement of *elementary* education; it however gave opportunity to the teachers—some of them sons of the poor—to acquire a liberal education, and thereby ultimately to become members of some learned profession.

As the reader is no doubt aware, the year 1843—that in which Mr. Leck became master of St. Rollox School—is famous in the history of the Church of Scotland as being the time of the Disruption of a large number of its members, and the concomitant establishment of the Free Church of Scotland. A prominent leader in this great movement was the late Reverend Robert Buchanan, D.D., of Glasgow, from whom, it is related, Mr. Leck held a flattering testimonial, which certified, among other points, that '*he* (Mr. Leck) *is thoroughly sound in doctrine*,' that is, as we presume, the distinctive doctrine of the Free Church respecting church government. The revered author of *The Ten Years' Conflict* must have somewhat modified his opinion of Mr. Leck's doctrinal soundness upon learning, some time after, that the latter had 'gone over' to the Established Church. We cannot but exonerate Mr. Leck, in his apostasy, from the charge of time-serving, and believe that the step was taken on conscientious grounds. The only explanation, however, he himself chose to give for the change was, that the Free Church had then 'too many ministers already.'

It was our privilege, when a very little boy, to sit meekly at the feet of Mr. Leck as one of his pupils. We believe it was under his paternally tutorial efforts we first realized the magical effect wrought in conjoin-

ing A and B, and B and A. We remember, with regret, that before we had been any considerable time at school, some one or other of the evils which afflict childhood necessitated our removal from his care, and that upon returning some time after, we found that he had left the school, and indeed the profession of teaching, for good. To this circumstance we attribute our inability to offer anything material of personal recollection regarding Mr. Leck as a teacher. The testimony of others, however, to whom personally and in his work he was well known, is to the effect that he was a conscientious, painstaking, and, to no inconsiderable extent, successful teacher of youth. One who knew him well, and, with other clergymen, made occasional presbyterial examinations of his school, relates that on a visit of this kind, made along with the late Rev. Dr. Black of Barony Parish Church, Glasgow, the latter observing Mr. Leck moving actively and cheerfully through the school, and otherwise displaying much energy, exclaimed *sotto voce* to our friend, 'Ech, man, but he's a nervous body that!' We may mention *en passant* that the Rev. Dr. Macfarlane, Principal of Glasgow University, was another clergyman who was in the habit of visiting St. Rollox School very frequently, not only at the instance of his presbytery, but spontaneously, drawn there by his interest in it as an educational agency.

As a circumstance which may possess some interest to teachers, we may mention, in connection with our reference to these presbyterial visitations and examinations, that a minister who had been for many years principal teacher of a large public school, and who had such presbyterial duties frequently assigned him, informs us that instruction in *music* then (that is, about

1843) formed no part of the course of study in public schools. He relates that it was some time after when he first heard secular music in a public school—Wilson's, in Montrose Street, Glasgow; and that on mentioning, at a meeting of his brethren assembled at Kinfauns, the circumstance of music being taught in that school, the statement was received with not a little surprise.

As already shown, Mr. Leck intended, and made, his school work to be only subservient as a stepping-stone to assist him to the pulpit. In prosecuting his studies to this end he was necessarily absent an hour or two in the mornings after the school had been opened, a circumstance which of course involved employment of an assistant teacher, to take charge during these regular absences. It is related that a Mr. Maclaren officiated for some time in this way as Mr. Leck's junior, and that, but for one rather formidable failing, he might have proved a tolerably acceptable dominie. The failing in question was a harmless one in itself, the objectionable feature in the matter being the untimely occasions chosen for its manifestation. In fact, Mr. Maclaren's shortcoming consisted in an evident want of appreciation of the principle that there is a time and place for everything, for very often, instead of devoting his own and the scholars' attention to their proper studies, he would produce his violin, range the children in dancing order, and, to the bars of some terpsichorean air, give them lessons on how to trip on the light fantastic toe! Like Plutus, Mr. Leck was lame in his approach, and, we regret to add, unlike Plutus, he was equally lame in his departure, for he walked with a heavy halt. To this disadvantage was due, it is related, the fact that Mr. Maclaren was never detected *flagrante delicto* in

his dancing irregularities, for his senior's slow and heavy tramp always gave timely notice at the stair foot of his approach, so that by the time he had reached the landing Mr. Maclareen had got his classes resumed at their ordinary studies, and all appearance of the banned pastime effaced. On such occasions Mr. Leck was sorely perplexed. In his lisping manner he would challenge his assistant thus: 'Thurely I heard thome one playing a fiddle jeth now, when I wath coming up the sthair?' Impossible! 'And danthin' too?' Incredible! In the infinitude of his good nature, he was always content to let the matter drop at this initiatory stage, and Mr. Maclareen's fun went on as fast and furious in the mornings as before.

We have a vivid recollection, even at this late hour, of the mingled feelings of awe, fear, and solemnity which thrilled us every time we heard Mr. Leck call out in his grave manner and deep, sonorous voice, 'Thilenth!' and remember, even more vividly, the dismay and anguish which filled those called upon by him, in his lameness, to return the 'taws,' which had been pitched at them when engaged in some quiet chat with their neighbours, or found guilty of some other school misdemeanour. Such invitations were generally esteemed as little short of a species of *Bellerophontis literæ*, although, in the exercise of his disciplinary power, Mr. Leck invariably kept before him, in practice at least, the truth of Portia's plea, and seasoned his justice with kindly mercy.

Mr. Leck resigned his position in St. Rollox School to accept, we presume, an appointment as a licentiate of the Church of Scotland. In later years he was well known as the minister of Martyrs Established Church in Parliamentary Road, Glasgow, and sub-

sequently his name came prominently before the public in connection with his disputed settlement in Kilmalcolm Parish Church.

On 1st October 1852 Mr. John Donald was appointed head-master of the school.

Unlike his predecessors, Mr. Donald had taken to teaching not as a *dernier resort*, when other employment had failed, or as a makeshift in seeking another calling, but as a profession—his first and last. He had served, in Free St. Peter's School, Glasgow, a Government apprenticeship to the profession, and was among the first of those who had undergone such training to receive an appointment as head-master.

For some time after Mr. Leck's resignation there elapsed an *interregnum*, during which the duties of the school were conducted, apparently in a fugitive way, by teachers whose tenure of office must have been of rather a precarious nature, and who probably worked accordingly, that is, sat pretty loose to their duties, having in view their temporary character. In our utter ignorance of even the names of these daysmen, we are obliged to leave them to the vile oblivion

‘From whence they sprung,
Unwept, unhonoured, and unsung!’

—SCOTT.

We are, however, in a position to record one result of their labours—real or pretended—which was, that, at his appointment, Mr. Donald found the number of scholars *reduced to less than thirty*. The consequent beggarly array of empty benches must have had rather a dispiriting influence upon him; but he was not the man to fold his hands in despondency, and sit down in despair. If he had anything at all to do with

despair, it appears to have been to gather courage from it, for he tackled bravely to the task of filling his benches with pupils,¹ and of dissipating the echoing dreariness by the cheerfulness bred of a busy, prosperous school. To this task Mr. Donald brought the help of various assistants. At first, for judicious reasons, he gleaned these only from the field offered by his senior pupils, who 'for the honour of the thing' were 'only too glad' to accept the promotion offered in an unpaid monitorship. The first boy employed in this capacity by Mr. Donald was Robert Paul; subsequently, and as occasion demanded, John P. Young, Gavin Wilson, Thomas Duncanson, David Gray, and others assisted in this department of gentlemanly literature.

By and by, as times brightened through the increased number of pupils attending the school, this gratuitous assistance was found inadequate, and duly qualified teachers had to be employed. Among these qualified teachers we well remember Mr. Greenlees, then Mr. Thomas Maclellan, and lastly Miss Nicholl. In the choice of these assistants we cannot but think Mr. Donald was very fortunate.

To hear Mr. Greenlees give even but one lesson was sufficient to ensure him being held in remembrance for the remainder of one's natural life. He spoke with great rapidity and with a peculiar accent, somewhat akin to Celtic; his manner and movements were most animated, and his keen interest in his work shone in his eyes, which glowed brightly during the whole lesson. Mr. Greenlees was a good teacher in general, and an excellent teacher of grammar in particular. His illustrated definition of the Cases deserves record

¹ Among the additions to the school in the first month of Mr. Donald's incumbency was the author.

here :—‘The mind, like the body, travels. Whatever it starts from on its journey is the nominative : whatever it rests at, or travels to, is the objective. Prepositions and active transitive verbs are the finger-posts, which point the way to the latter.’

Mr. Maclellan was also very animated in his manner of teaching. Of rather a ‘comfortable’ mould, his bodily exertions in giving his lessons told more upon him than equal exertions might have done upon most other teachers, whom we have observed to be, generally, of slender build. The spectacle of Mr. Maclellan, divested of his coat, sometimes even having his waistcoat open, and withal sweating so freely that the drops were seen trickling off the point of his nose, was thus no unusual occurrence. If we remember aright, he was the first to inaugurate lessons in singing in the school ; and in connection with this circumstance, it may be mentioned as a noticeable coincidence, that his brother, Mr. John Maclellan, was the first teacher of singing in the new school in Garngad Road.

Mr. Donald was also assisted in his labours by Mrs. Donald, who carried on the initiatory and industrial departments of the school for some years.

From the commencement of Mr. Donald’s labours in the old school, the attendance increased almost daily, so that, after a few years’ hard work, he had the satisfaction of finding his difficulties, in the number of his scholars, exactly reversed. We have shown that, on assuming control of the school, he found the attendance so low as less than thirty. For a year or two before the transfer of the school to Garngad Road, the attendance was limited only by the accommodation,—every seat and even the floor being utilized. Added to this, he had—what must have been rather a melan-

choly satisfaction—to decline, daily, applications for admission of pupils. The difficulties to be contended with in such an overcrowded school have, we conceive, to be experienced to be fully appreciated. This is a picture of which we ourselves have frequently formed part:—A class is arranged in order for reading, and this is the order. The school forms are placed so as to make three sides of a square, the remaining end being left purposely open for the teacher's ingress and egress. On the forms *stand* a row of pupils, against them is another row of pupils, who stand upon the floor, while the teacher moves about the square, or has his position at its open end. Occasionally it was found necessary to have even a *third* row in the same square, who were seated (to the envy of the others) before the second row. By such contrivances was space utilized. We have seen so many as ten or a dozen such terraced groups ranged in the school at one and the same time. Such an arrangement, besides being useful in economizing space, tended also to economy in a particular branch of pecuniary expenditure—to wit, that for hair-cutting. It frequently happened that girls constituted the back rows, and the heads of the boys before them were thus brought into convenient position for being operated upon by the scissors of the Delilahs behind. In this way it came to be the fortune, or misfortune, of the author, who, when a boy, had locks curly as those of immortal memory,—Paddy Carey's,—rarely to require the services of a barber, so deftly and often was he shorn of his hirsute ornaments. The shearing was generally performed just when the victim was reading aloud, or answering some question of his teacher.

Despite the inconveniences thus indicated, work was continued with unabated energy and perseverance, until

the truth was painfully realized, that, for the continued prosperity of the school, and still more for the extension it appeared then capable of, a much larger building was imperatively called for. Additional cogency was given to this conviction by the dilapidated condition of the school-rooms. Thirty years' tear and wear, as only school children can tear and wear, had made the place a sad contrast to the flourishing institution within its walls. The ceiling was veined and cracked all over, and hung above our devoted heads seemingly as agreeable to fall and snap the slender threads of our young lives as was the sword of Damocles ; in fact, so spongy had the roof become, that Her Majesty's Inspector, on the occasion of his last visit to the school in Castle Street, poked his umbrella through the lime and rotten woodwork in several places, and asseverated that he would recommend the discontinuance of the Government grant to the school unless the rooms were put in more habitable and safe condition. The side walls were plentifully besmeared with inks of various colours and shades, and the floors might well-nigh have forgotten their original material and colour. Rare and valuable autographs—at least the characters in which they were written were ungainly and uncouth enough to make the offence of mistaking them for such quite pardonable—were freely traced on the window-panes, cut on the shutters, and daubed on the walls ; cartoons—which, if not possessing the same force, at any rate were quite as startling as that of the ‘Dance of Death’—graced the hidden corners of the school and the dark corners of the stair ; spiders, having apparently none daring to make them afraid, spun their webs as long and luxurious as they chose ; and beetles, of Falstaffian proportions, lived riotously in the nooks and crannies

of the fireplaces and floors. So deepened the shadows of our coming events. In our childish way we all knew that the darker the night the nearer the day; but, in common with our teacher, we then sometimes thought the day long in dawning, and that the night was very dark.'

At this juncture in the history of the school, the intervention of one of the firm of Messrs. Charles Tennant & Co. most probably saved to the district the continued services of Mr. Donald, and certainly gave to it an institution which then, and indeed until a recent date, was, as respects size, equipment, and facilities generally, wholly unknown in the neighbourhood.

The drawings in the first pages of this book will convey a pretty adequate idea of the external features of this new school and of the old one it replaced; the contrast thus presented in their exteriors is as nothing compared with that which sketches of their interiors would have shown.

We well remember the mingled feelings of wonder and admiration, we had almost added awe, with which we first contemplated the interior of the new school. We are not quite sure that we did not then experience somewhat of a respect kindred to that alleged to have been shown by a simple-minded farmer, who, upon entering his squire's drawing-room, skipped from centre to centre of the designs on the carpet, so as to avoid sullying the bright, clean, coloured margins intervening.

To be sure there was no carpet there to torment our soul, but there were the long sweep of smooth, fresh flooring, the bran new black - boards, the shining, gaudily-coloured new maps,—geographical, mechanical, and musical,—the 'pulpits' or 'desks' at the north

ends of lower and upper halls, the green-painted pillars festooned by circles of gas jets, and—well-nigh too sacred for our juvenile feet—the entrance hall, with its inside folding door panelled with stained and figured glass, its handsome purple and gold-coloured pendant lamp, and, in a sense better than all, the little wicket door from which the bell rope coiled out.

Oh ! that bell ! What a flood of joyous memories flow forth as we remember that bell ! No words may fitly describe the delirious intoxication of joy which we—a delicate boy—felt, when, in his indulgent moods, the janitor would permit us to toll forth the ‘muster call’ at 10 or 1 o’clock. Grasping the rope firmly by both hands, standing on the left foot, ‘stelling’ the other against the wall, there, with no one to question us, we pulled and gave, and gave and pulled right fearlessly, oblivious to every sound or other sensation save the melody of the ponderous bell overhead. We fancy the poet Poe knew something of such exercise : he sings,—

‘ Hear the mellow sounding bells—golden bells !
 What a world of happiness their harmony foretells !
 Through the balmy air of night
 How they ring out their delight !
 From the molten-golden notes
 What a liquid ditty floats !
 What a gush of euphony voluminously wells !
 How it swells !
 How it dwells
 On the future !
 ——————
 were How it tells
 —grace Of the rapture
 corners That impels
 daring to To the swinging
 and luxurio And the ringing,
 proportions, To the rhyming
 And the chiming
 Of the bells !

Alas! like every other enjoyment of earth, ours arising from this bell-ringing was often sadly marred, abruptly ended. The good janitor's indulgent moods were rather uncertain in their advent and duration, and even when they augured well, our consequent felicity has not unseldom been determined by the bell throwing a somersault, thereby putting its gearing out of order, all the result of our ardour in ringing. Nevertheless, we remember with more distinctness now, and with pleasure, our joy in this occupation; and were it for nothing else than the raptures we experienced from that bell, we owe a debt of gratitude to the generous hand that paid, or helped to pay, for the hanging of it.

But, together with ourselves, our fellows of St. Rollox School have to recognise, with grateful sentiments, in that hand the instrument of many kind deeds, which always carried with them the charms of unostentation and self-negation.

Indeed, our knowledge of these qualities, as pertaining to the friend to whom we now allude, places restraint and reserve upon our pen. In sympathy with his known disposition, we are unable to give expression to the fulness of our mind in this wise, but we feel sure that we are safe from misapprehension, if, forbidden to wreath his name with the warmly coloured flowers of day, we employ, in a sense, only the quieter tinted flowers of night.

Although thus we may not in this matter speak as freely as we would otherwise have wished to do, we have, as beneficiaries, while respecting to the full his retiring, unassuming disposition, a duty to perform to ourselves, in acknowledging the more personal and prominent attention of Mr. John Tennant in the affairs of our school.

Prior to the erection of the new school, he evinced no little interest in the well-being of the one in Castle Street, and, within his own sphere, sought at once the benefit of the families of the *employés* in the works of his firm, and the prosperity of the school, by recommending, after his manner, the advantages which the school offered.

When, from the causes already stated, the inadequacy and unsuitability in every respect of the old school became all too apparent, the credit of originating the scheme of the new school and expediting its execution was entirely due to Mr. John Tennant. And when we consider what a great improvement this new school was upon any in the district—in fact, that it *is* perhaps equal to any school of the same class *now* in the district, it reflects well, we think, upon Mr. Tennant's liberality and foresight. The existence of School Boards, with all their exhaustive but costly machinery, was a thing undreamt of at the time of erection of the new school, nor, so far as we can gather, did legislation then indicate any bias in that direction; but had this contingency been even remotely foreshadowed on the political horizon, we venture to assert the new school would have been on a scale which would have rendered unnecessary the extension of the premises, now in hand as we write.

Mr. Tennant was not wont to strut in 'his ain kail yard,' and we suppose not a few of our fellow pupils will be unaware of ever having seen him in the school.

The only occasion on which we ourselves can remember having seen him there was once in company with half a dozen or more Servians (so far as our lore then enabled us to judge), the latter in full national costume; and we need scarcely say that,

whatever estimate they formed of the capabilities or demeanour of the pupils, they could not fail to be impressed with the reverential, scared air we all wore in presence of their towering hats and swarthy, mustachioed countenances.

We could and would have readily said more redounding to the good name of this benefactor of our school ; we have felt that, in justice to him and the former pupils of St. Rollox School, we could not well say less than we have done ; and in closing this reference to one who has so well and so unostentatiously earned our thanks, in extending opportune and considerate kindness, which, like charity, ‘is not puffed up, . . . seeketh not her own,—like mercy,

‘Is twice blessed,
It blesseth him that gives, and him that takes,’—

and which bears with it no degradation to its recipients, we are sure we carry with us the concurring hearts of every one of our old schoolfellows in wishing him, as he now approaches his eighty-first year, all the peace and solace called for in the deep twilight of his life. •

The new school in Garngad Road was opened in August 1858. There was no inauguration ceremony at the opening, although some of us were of opinion there was room enough for one.

The contrast between the old and the new buildings was very marked and agreeable. With a place for everything, and room for us all to move in comfort, we felt as if, in coming to the school in Garngad Road, we had exchanged a prison for a drawing-room.

Instead of three small rooms, in the new school we had a spacious tenement of two flats, each flat having more and better accommodation than the whole of the old school together. We found properly walled playgrounds, amply supplied with lavatories and other conveniences for cleanliness and decency ; and if our view in front and sides of school was limited and uninteresting, behind we could behold a long expanse of green fields.

The increased accommodation thus acquired gave opportunity for the cultivation of other branches of education, which, until then, had unavoidably been neglected in the school. Drawing began to be taught ; music was taught theoretically and practically—the scholars being grouped into two separate classes, taught on different days ; and gymnastics and drill were taught in the playground to the boys by the janitor. An innovation was also made in conducting the devotions, instrumental music being then first employed in the psalmody. The instrument (a harmonium) stood in the west corner of the north end of the lower hall, and was screened from view by a green cloth curtain mounted on brass railings. What a blood-creeping sensation thrilled us through as its solemn strains filled the hall that morning it was first brought into requisition ! And how hearty with its help was our rendering of the rolling St. Lawrence, compared with our whining of Evans or St. Neots, in the old school, without such help ! Subsequently, the duty, or rather the privilege, of presiding at the harmonium appeared to be equally shared by Robert Hunter, Samuel Cameron, and another. Our enjoyment of this service of praise was nearly equalled by our lessons in music. We remember how eagerly we

watched and waited for the appearance of the handsome face and figure of the special teacher for this subject,—Mr. John Maclellan,¹—and the delight with which we received his keynotes for part singing. After an interval of nearly twenty years, we have still fresh in our memory the happy faces and silvery, ringing voices, seen and heard when we simultaneously rendered ‘The harvest - time,’ with its pleasing imagery of rural life :—

‘Through lanes, with hedge-rows pearly,
Go forth the reapers early
To cull the yellow corn :—
Good luck betide their shearing,
For winter now is nearing,
And we must fill the barn,’ etc. ;

or the May song, the ‘Canadian boat song,’ or, ‘School is over.’ In this connection, we cannot help remarking that if teachers and School Boards only realized how much children *love* to sing, this delightful subject would receive *more and better* attention. We had not many excellent voices in the school ; our best boy in this respect was William Lakin. None who were contemporaneous with this lad in their attendance at St. Rollox are likely to forget his pleasing rendering of ‘How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace ; that bringeth good tidings of good, that publisheth salvation ; that saith unto Zion, Thy God reigneth ! . . . Break forth into joy, sing together, ye waste places of Jerusalem ; for the Lord hath comforted His people, He hath redeemed Jerusalem’ (Isa. lii. 7, 9).

¹ An eminent lecturer on music, in an important educational institution of Glasgow, once remarked : ‘Mr. Maclellan, when he forsook Glasgow, left behind him no public teacher, so far as known to me, possessed of musical taste equal to his own.’

Under the improved conditions we have briefly indicated for the school's continued prosperity and growth, it did continue to prosper and to grow. The number of pupils was gradually augmented. Although, at times, considerably decreased upon the opening of some new school in the neighbourhood¹ (apparently people relish novelty in the matter of schools as well as in other matters), the temporary ebbs soon ceased, and the tide of prosperity returned.

With this varying fortune, but still steadily increasing in the roll and efficiency, the school continued until 1874, when its transfer to the possession and control of the School Board of Glasgow was effected. For some time prior to this, the attendance had been found even in excess of the convenient accommodation of the building. Recognising this difficulty, the Board sought to meet it by converting the master's house into class-rooms, and in 1875—while we write—the premises are being further enlarged to accommodate 850 pupils in all.

On 25th June of the same year, Mr. Donald was transferred by the School Board to the head-mastership of Thomson Street Public School, Glasgow.

In view of the loss by the school of its peculiar identity, through its transference to the School Board, of its extensive enlargements, of the transfer to another

¹ Mr. Donald has frequently remarked to his former pupils: 'It is impossible to achieve an historical name as a teacher in St. Rollox. I find that the opening of a new school in the district immediately results in the loss of a couple of hundred or so of children. They—the same children—generally return to me after a short time, but such occurrences are very disappointing and discouraging. As, in a degree, a set-off to this, I find consolation in the steady adherence of some families, such as the Fenwicks. For the last twenty years I have never been without a Fenwick!'

sphere of its master, who had in St. Rollox served his day and generation for twenty-three years faithfully and well, we may be excused if,—using a little liberty with the well-known phrase of George Moggridge, better known to the scholars of St. Rollox as ‘Old Humphrey’—we ask, ‘Stands St. Rollox School where it did?’

Any history of the school which failed to notice Mr. Donald’s system of teaching would be evidently incomplete. The preparation of a formal notice of this kind by us would, we feel, be almost an impertinence,—in the first instance, because of our youth when we were under that system; and in the second instance, our subsequent want of experience in teaching. In such circumstances it is a relief and pleasure to us to offer to the reader, as we now do, the testimony of gentlemen well qualified and warranted to testify on such a question.

‘Teaching’ says one of the friends we allude to, ‘is both a science and an art, and hence both talent and tact are required in order to secure any degree of success in it. The dispositions and capacities of children for receiving instruction are so varied, that it requires a diligent study of human nature, in its earlier stages, in order to grapple successfully with the many difficulties in the way of progress.

‘Mr. Donald has acquired both the science and the art of teaching, and with great talent and abundant tact has been most successful as an instructor of youth, and has acquired for himself a wide-spread reputation. Those who have had the good fortune to be trained at St. Rollox School can fully justify this popular verdict.

' Mr. Donald possesses in a rare degree a varied knowledge of human nature, as developed in youth ; and his system of tuition is, in a great measure, based upon the theories of childish disposition and character which he has evolved for himself.

' No teacher can be more assiduous in checking evil habits, or take more pains in fostering and encouraging upright and persevering action. His energy and enthusiasm have been most wonderful. The Rev. Mr. Arthur delights to relate that the first time he saw Mr. Donald in the old school, he had his coat off, and was up to the elbows in a tub of water, explaining some chemical theory to a class of eager listeners. He loves his work, and hence he inspires a love of it in his pupils, which in no other way could be so effectually imparted ; for in this sense also it is true that love begets love.

' Ever active himself, at no time is indolence permitted during school work ; and the strict discipline at all times maintained under his firm rule greatly helps to further the progress of his pupils.

' Without system the greatest industry sometimes achieves but very little. Systematic arrangement is necessary to progress in any pursuit or occupation. And in this Mr. Donald excels.

' In explaining any subject, his style is always simple. He ever strives to make his explanation understood even by the dullest, and will often simplify his explanation even for the sake of a single scholar. Any person who has heard him elucidate a difficulty in arithmetic or grammar, can never forget his admirable simplicity and thoroughness.

' His mind is naturally of a reasoning type, and he therefore delights in exactness and clearness of argument. While thus simplifying difficulties, he at the

same time endeavours to get the pupil to overcome the difficulty by individual effort. The scholar is in this way truly "*educated*," i.e. the latent power of grasping knowledge is brought into play, or, literally, "led out" into active exercise.

'Mr. Donald's exertions to simplify arithmetical processes have been attended with much success, as they deserve to be. He has, to our knowledge, spent many thoughtful days and sleepless nights in working out his ideas, and putting them into permanent, proper shape. His books, entitled, *Commercial Arithmetic* and *Arithmetic of Fractions*, are the fruit of much study and prolonged application. Honour is due to him for his arduous endeavours to simplify the acquirement of that important subject for beginners and advanced pupils.

'Although his system of teaching arithmetic has perhaps made him more known to the public than any other thing, still this is but a sample of his whole style of teaching. The simultaneous method of teaching reading has seldom been brought to such perfection as in St. Rollox School. The enunciation and expression are alike carefully attended to.

'In inculcating religious and moral instruction, Mr. Donald is always most zealous and powerful. The great doctrines of our faith are taught with faithfulness and impressiveness, as only those who *believe them in heart* may teach.

'The "Golden Rule" is always held up as the guiding principle of commercial and common life,—honesty and honour being continually set forth as going hand in hand. Many will look back with delight upon these morning lessons, which must have cost Mr. Donald much study and careful preparation.'

'The main characteristic of Mr. Donald's teaching,'

says another, 'is simply an earnest desire to make all intellectual subjects so simple, that they will be easily understood by children of average intellect. No one who has ever seen Mr. Donald teach could fail to notice that this was his great aim. The methods which he employs are in many respects entirely his own,—unique and ingenious,—and which probably in the hands of another, who has only learned these methods by book, would not be so successful.

'One can only judge of a method from the results which it produces, and would call that a good method which makes the subject clear and interesting to the children, and at the same time stimulates their reasoning faculties. Again, the success of a method greatly depends on a thorough understanding of the subject on the part of the teacher, and a due appreciation of the abilities and failings of the children. From what I have seen in St. Rollox, I can confidently say that Mr. Donald is very successful in these respects; from his long experience he knows those points over which the children are apt to stumble and fall, but which he can clear up most satisfactorily. Besides these, there are many little things which contribute to the success of a method, but which cannot receive justice on paper—such as the happy illustrations which the teacher throws out, the expressions of the features, and the movements of the whole body in general. These all produce a wonderful effect on the minds of the children. And this is the case with Mr. Donald: every movement of the body and expression of the features is, with him, done for a purpose.

'Those subjects in the teaching of which Mr. Donald differs from other teachers whom I have seen at work, are reading, grammar, and arithmetic. . . .

' It is in arithmetic, however, that St. Rollox School has been principally distinguished. The methods of teaching this subject are peculiar to that institution, and have nearly all been devised by Mr. Donald. The special feature I have already mentioned as characterizing Mr. Donald's teaching is here strikingly displayed. His whole effort is to make those branches of arithmetic which have all along been considered difficult for teacher to teach and pupil to understand, so clear and interesting, that the latter cannot fail to grasp them. At the same time the pupil is made to exercise his reasoning powers so thoroughly, that though the operations are made so simple that every pupil *cannot* but understand them, nothing is done which may prevent the subject from being, what it always should be, a thoroughly intellectual one.'

Lord Brougham, in his memorable speech on Law Reform, said: 'It was the boast of Augustus—it formed part of the glare in which the perfidies of his earlier years were lost—that he found Rome of brick, and left it of marble; a praise not unworthy a great prince, and to which the present reign has its claims also.' Modified to suit the humbler history of our school, the compliment is not inappropriate to our old teacher and friend, Mr. Donald. He found St. Rollox School of brick,—perhaps rubble would be the better metaphor,—and, compared with its first state, left it of gleaming marble. And in closing this notice, we would express the hope that the same success may follow him, not only in the new sphere to which he has gone, but all through life. To him we would say in the words of a great moralist:¹ 'The spring and the summer of your days are gone; and with them, not only the joys they

¹ Alison.

knew, but many of the friends who gave them. You have entered upon the autumn of your being,' but we hope it will only 'bring with it consolations more valuable than all the enjoyments of former days.'

ST. ROLLOX SCHOOL, GLASGOW.

IN CASTLE STREET.

Service Commencing in Year			Service Ending in Year
HEAD-MASTERS.			
1827.	Mr. Walker,	.	Uncertain.
Uncertain.	„ Masterton,	.	Uncertain.
1843.	„ Alexander Leck,	.	1851.
1852.	„ John Donald,	.	Continued in new school.
ASSISTANTS.			
1854.	Mrs. John Donald,	.	do.
1854.	Miss Nicoll,	.	do.
1856.	Mr. Thomas Maclellan,	.	1858.

IN GARNGAD ROAD.

HEAD-MASTER.		
1858.	Mr. John Donald,	.
ASSISTANTS.		
1858.	Mrs. John Donald,	.
1858.	Miss Nicoll,	.
1859.	Mr. Donald Ross,	.
1861.	„ Alexander Linn,	.
1863.	„ Thomas Brunton,	.
1864.	„ Thomas Duncanson,	.
1865.	Miss Margaret MacCallum,	.
1866.	Mr. George Taylor,	.
1866.	„ Hugh Murray,	.
1868.	„ Ogilvie,	.
1869.	„ James Harvey,	.

Service Commencing in Year					Service Ending in Year
1870.	Mr. Archibald Andrews,	.	.	.	1872.
1871.	„ David Newlands,	.	.	.	1873.
1872.	„ Alexander Brown,	.	.	.	1874.
1874.	„ Robert Black,	.	.	.	1875.
1874.	„ Robert Muir,	.	.	.	1875.
1875.	„ James Calder,	.	.	.	Not ended in 1875. And Visiting Masters for Special Branches.

PUPIL-TEACHERS.

1858.	Mr. Thomas Duncanson,	.	.	.	1862.
1858.	„ Robert Hunter,	.	.	.	1860.
1858.	„ H. Dow,	.	.	.	1862.
1858.	Miss M. MacCallum,	.	.	.	1862.
1860.	Mr. William Mackenzie,	.	.	.	1864.
1862.	„ Andrew Eadie,	.	.	.	1866.
1862.	„ Robert Brownlie,	.	.	.	1866.
1863.	Miss Margaret Fenwick,	.	.	.	1867.
1863.	„ Jessie Hunter,	.	.	.	1867.
1867.	„ Janet Cameron,	.	.	.	1871.
1867.	„ Margaret Bell,	.	.	.	1871.
1868.	Mr. John MacInnes,	.	.	.	1872.
1868.	Miss Margt. A. M'Culloch,	.	.	.	1872.
1869.	„ Christina M'Gillivray,	.	.	.	1873.
1869.	Mr. David Lang,	.	.	.	1873.
1870.	„ John Robertson,	.	.	.	1874.
1871.	„ James Shearer,	.	.	.	1875.
1871.	Miss Agnes Fenwick,	.	.	.	1875.
1872.	„ Elizabeth Lang,	.	.	.	Not ended in 1875.
1872.	„ Martha Dunn,	.	.	.	do.
1873.	„ Marion Wilson,	.	.	.	do.
1873.	„ Bertha Leigh,	.	.	.	do.

Note.—This statement has not been compiled by the author. Data for its verification, if obtainable at all, could only be got with much difficulty; and being without such data, the compiler does not vouch for the strict accuracy of the statement.

M E M O R A B I L I A.

A flow'r thrown carelessly away
Upon a river, flowing free,—
It glides, unseen, thro' foam and spray,
Unto the restless, rolling sea.

By billows borne to some far shore,
It finds, unmark'd, a genial strand ;
Its seed, unscath'd, bursts from its core—
The flow'r blooms in that distant land !

So are the words, the looks, the deeds,
Which oft we call light, thoughtless, stray,
Forgetful of the deathless seeds
They in their bosoms bear away.

Thus 'tis we find, when years have fled,
These things of jest, or wrath, or pain—
Not buried with the voiceless dead,
But living, growing still again.

—HUGH A. DOW.



MEMORABILIA.

MR. DONALD'S system of teaching almost necessarily calls for discipline of a very strict and unflinching order. That he is capable of effecting and maintaining such discipline, most of those who have had the benefits of his care as a teacher will be ready to admit.

Longfellow, in his touching poem entitled, 'Killed at the Ford,' says of the genial, winning bearing of his hero, that it was owned

' . . . With one consent ;'

and so, we presume, will be the strict character of Mr. Donald's *régime*; but, unlike the warrior's mollifying graces, it has not always

' Hush'd all murmurs of discontent.'

It would, indeed, be something unusual in the history of conscientious efforts to discharge unswervingly and assiduously any onerous duty, to find that such had been accomplished without incurring the loss of favour of some one or other whose path had been crossed in such efforts; and, we need hardly add, liability to incurring displeasure in this way is of course increased in cases where the duty sought to be performed has, like tuition, as one of its incidents, the administration

of due discipline, which, like every other form of affliction, is to those coming under it at no time pleasant, but grievous.

Mr. Donald's experience in this respect has, we believe, been much the same as that of his neighbours. Advocates of 'spare the rod and spoil the child' have not unseldom had occasion to look him up with reference to this very subject of discipline, when brought home to members of their own families.

It is within our knowledge that no person ever approached Mr. Donald on this subject, in a civil manner, without receiving a courteous and respectful hearing. It is likewise within our knowledge that no attempt to approach him otherwise on the subject ever failed promptly to get the attention it deserved, generally capped by the offender's children being placed under the said offender's more lenient discipline, or otherwise entirely at his or her disposal,—in short, turned out of the school.

We ourselves have no feeling that any defence or palliation of Mr. Donald's actions in this way was ever called for; nor are we sure, if it were, that he would elect us for his Counsel in the matter. In a later part of this book will be found, in his own words, a more authoritative and satisfactory explanation of his guiding principle in the dispensation of school discipline than we could presume or hope to give. Is it needful to say that we, in common, we believe, with all who heard the explanation from his own lips, as well as with those who will now learn it from our pages, accept, unhesitatingly and with pleasure, his statement to the full? And in passing from treatment of the matter in this respect, we would only add that, apart altogether from the weight and credence attaching to

his statements on any subject, due to his severely simple rectitude, testimony is borne to the truth of the particular statement we have alluded to, in the number of well-thrashed, whipped-up old pupils who now, as men holding no mean positions in the social scale, rally round him, recognising in him, even as they recount his delicate attentions to them with the birch and strap, one whom they delight to

'Enter on their list of friends.'¹

In the administration of his discipline, in one department of it, Mr. Donald was in the habit of using the smallest or infant class-room in the old school as a place of incarceration for obstreperous or other school criminals of a low type. This species of punishment was, we believe, given as a sort of equivalent to solitary confinement, as known in more regularly appointed prisons. Although the terms of imprisonment adjudged by our teacher were necessarily short, rarely exceeding an hour, or at the most an hour and a half, they were generally found very irksome, seeing their tedium was not relieved by the welcome arrival of the immemorial scone and water, which, like sunshine through cloud rifts, help to break the gloom, ever and anon, of our country's captives. In fact, it may be said that the absence of such pleasant interruptions mainly constituted the disagreeable element in these brief imprisonments, seeing that they were 'taken out' most frequently just at the very time when the prisoners' stomachs were ready and willing to take in, that is, either at noonday or after four o'clock.

The prison-base of this small apartment consisted

¹ Cowper.

only of the lock and key in its door, and the ‘snib’ on its window. This latter—the window—was directly over the street door of the school, which had a cope-stone projecting sufficiently to enable one to stand comfortably upon it, and within easy reach from the window. It will thus be seen that but little difficulty presented itself to any one of ordinary agility and nerve in seeking egress by the window; accordingly, as shown elsewhere in these pages, it was no uncommon circumstance for boys detained for sins of omission or commission to find their way out by it to the street when they were not closely watched, and thus escape home.

A pupil named M'Lellan, a brother of Daniel M'Lellan, whom we mention further on, was once immured for some offence in this little place, and in effecting his clandestine exit from it displayed at once considerable daring and about the same amount of stupidity. This latter quality was shown in his apparently having left the window untried, although its unfastening might easily have been accomplished by him; the former quality, by his climbing up the narrow flue of the fireplace in the room, getting on to the roof, and, by means of ropes and some scaffolding, contriving to find his way down into the chemical works, from which he walked home. This escapade occurred at the interval between twelve and one o'clock, but was unobserved by any one; it was only upon the door being unlocked, and the discovery made of his absence, that it was proved, by the barred window and the sooty fireplace, he had escaped as mentioned.

M'Lellan did not return that afternoon, but next morning put in an appearance in an entirely ‘new shell’ (or a different one rather), as we used to say in

these times. His ordinary suit of clothes was not, it is presumed, improved in appearance by having done duty as a chimney besom, and it was probably due to this circumstance that he came trussed out in a suit which must have been the property of his father, or one or other of his full-grown brothers. The rugosity of his coat sleeves and trousers was a spectacle happily but seldom witnessed; and had there been the least room for the imputation that the clothes were his own, one would have credited his tailor with being a far-seeing person, who allowed a good margin for the growth of his patrons.

The poor lad, after shivering in terror among the immensity of his broadcloth, was absolved from the guilt of his crime of prison breaking on the ground that the chimney, which till then had never drawn satisfactorily, had begun, through his thorough clearance of it, to go splendidly.

In the new school in Garngad Road an achievement even more foolhardy than M'Lellan's was accomplished by a boy whose name we withhold, for the reason that the occurrence is comparatively recent, and that in his ignominious dismissal from school his father's character for good faith was brought into a bad light.

This youth, whom we shall call Jack,—for brevity's sake dispensing with the *Jumping*,—one day had failed seriously in his tasks, in a manner which clearly evinced neglect of his studies at home, and he was accordingly detained at mid-day until he had acquired them, and so made up for lost time and ground. He happened to be the only one who that day suffered detention, and in order that he might not be left alone during this hour, he was kept in the upper hall, where Mr. Donald remained also. We understand that in

this arrangement of being with his ‘kept in’ scholar, effect was given to a salutary rule of the School Boards, to the end that no pupil, while undergoing such discipline, should be left alone by his teacher, lest a feeling of *imprisonment* should take the place of the other feeling—unavoidable in such circumstances—of *restraint*, experienced by the pupil. We daresay it was less with reference to this stated regulation than upon principle that Mr. Donald shared Jack’s confinement, and that on quitting the hall for a few minutes to enter his house, which was then part of the same flat, the former purposely left the mid-door wide open. On returning he found, to his consternation, that Jack had got out at the south end window, which the culprit had left open, leaping from it to the girls’ playground, a depth of about seventeen feet. As in M’Lellan’s case, so in this one—none observed the daring escapade. It is not to be wondered at that his teacher’s excitement was intense. Search in the playground showed that no blood had been lost by the young harum-scarum ; his quiet and quick disappearance was proof that his bones had not been broken ; but the mere fact of an occurrence of this kind, originating in such a comparatively trifling matter, becoming bruited abroad, was certainly calculated not to improve Mr. Donald’s professional reputation or prospects ; and, in relating the incident to the author, he said he passed the whole night walking up and down his room.

To his relief in one way, he beheld Jack next morning enter the school ‘bright as a button,’ and without a scratch ; he had, however, got sufficient of his pupil, and dismissed him. Later in the day Jack returned, accompanied by his father, who begged hard for his son’s re-admission to the school, which Mr.

Donald eventually agreed to on condition that, as a punishment for his misdemeanour, Jack should be *confined to bed* for a fortnight! This unusual stipulation was at once accepted by his parent; but during ~~the~~ currency of the fortnight Jack was seen outdoors on several occasions, and on father and son returning at its expiration, Mr. Donald, preventing either the opportunity of making any mis-statement, told them promptly, that as they had not abided by the only condition which could make the son's re-admission to school permissible, he could not allow the boy back.

In relating the punishment awarded Jack, we have not been able to divest our mind of—

“ ‘Tis the voice of the sluggard, I hear him complain,
“ You have waked me too soon, I must slumber again,””—

considering it—the punishment—in the light of an excellent remedy for a rather prevalent disease, which does not manifest itself in leaping windows. In applying such a remedy, we should be disposed to substitute boards for feathers.

James Morning was a boy who gave but little promise of ever developing into a bright (metaphorical) day. His first public appearance at St. Rollox might almost be said to have been as a *wet Morning*. Mr. Donald, acquainted with this appearance, and his subsequent history as a pupil of St. Rollox School, relates both with graphic glee. We think our memory will serve us to quote him *verbatim* :—

“ “Down wid ye, ye dhivil! down wid ye!” The speaker is Morning's father, and “ye dhivil” is our hopeful James. A stout rope is round the latter's body, under his armpits, and by this contrivance his father

is ducking him head over ears in the basin of the canal at St. Rollox. “Arrah, by Jas—s! an’ yer won’t go to school, will yer? Down wid ye thin, ye dhivil!” and down surely enough goes James over the head for the first plunge. Rising to the surface choking and blustering, but still suspended on the rope, he again is apostrophized. “Now ye dhivil of a varmint! will yer go to school? Spake to me, ye stubborn dhivil!”—but, though suffocating and drenched all over, never a word says James. (Whiningly) “Ach, sure it’s yersilf az wid vix the heart ov the Virgin! Spake to me, ye onnataral varmint! Will yer go to school, will yer?” but, crass and stubborn as a mule, even in his perilous position, James will not yield a word. “An’ ye’ll not even spake to me? Well, down wid ye, down wid ye, ye dhivil!” and for the second time James lost sight of land. On rising again, his vigorous sire was about to repeat the comedy—which would probably have deepened into a tragedy—when the arrival of a policeman on the scene was the means of restoring James at once to animation and *terra firma*.

‘It was not long after this when the pair again came under my notice in the following manner. I conducted at that time an evening school, which commenced at 7.30 o’clock, and one night, shortly after the school had opened, Morning senior arrived with his son.

‘With a preliminary flourish of complimentary oaths, in which I was alternately lauded as the best of teachers, and consigned to quarters better left unmentioned, now at any rate, he explained, “as he heerd as I wasn’t afrightened to wallup the boys, he thought as he wid give Jemmy a trial at my school,” signifying

by sundry nods and inuendoes that the last teacher honoured by his patronage had signally failed in the “walluping” process.

‘When left with James, I asked him what length he had managed to get in arithmetic, and was told compound division. I placed on his slate a question in this rule, and left him to work it out in a reasonable time. Returning, I found he had done nothing in the matter, and the only satisfaction I could get in reply to my inquiry, “if it were done?” was an abrupt “No.” I then gave him a question in long division (simple), but, watching him by the tail of my eye as I went my rounds in the school, could perceive that he made no effort in that case also. Going up to him, I had my inquiry answered by a leer, in which all and sundry were obviously invited to observe how Donald was being “done.” As a last trial, I gave him an easy question in simple addition, and in passing my desk, after leaving him, took out my cane—thinking it well to be prepared for action. “Are you done?” I asked, when I had got his length again, and again was answered by a leer. Doubling him up before he was well aware of what I was about, I dealt him there and then a severe thrashing, and on ceasing, must own that I looked for something disagreeable, as he was a big lump of a fellow. His excess of anger seemed for the time to render him undecided; but recovering himself shortly, and blustering fearfully, he sprang to the door, down the stair in a bound, and rushed out—into his father’s arms! The poor old man, knowing from experience the *dénouement* which would probably ensue, had been waiting patiently all the time across the street, and, seeing the sudden light through the open door, had instantly judged how matters stood,

and rushed across just in time to secure his son. Dragging him by the collar, he brought him back, but I thought it advisable to leave James alone for the rest of that evening.

‘To the credit of the father it should be stated that, although his son was earning six shillings a week, so anxious was he that the latter should receive a fair education, James was taken from his work entirely and sent to my day school. He attended pretty regularly, and, on the whole, behaved not much worse than the other boys ; but this was due to policy, not principle.

‘One day, having occasion to be out of school for a short time, I left a lad—Robert Paul—in charge during my absence. On returning, I observed at once there had been mischief going on ; but pretending not to have observed this, in throwing off my overcoat I said, “Well, Robert, I presume matters have been going on as usual ? nothing wrong, I suppose ?” In a grumbling tone Robert complained that “that boy Morning was making the scholars laugh at me.” “Oh !” I said. “James Morning, come here,” I called out ; and James came at once. “Were you making the boys laugh at Robert ?” I asked ; and to my surprise, he answered instantly, “Yes, sir ; but” (holding up his right hand as if taking an oath) “I will never do it again !” I thought it well to let him off on that occasion, and take him at his word. “And how did he get on afterwards ?” Well, moderately ; he remained some time with me, and was improved intellectually, but left with his affections unchanged.’

In illustration of appreciation of Mr. Donald’s discipline, may be cited the case of a person who brought

his son to St. Rollox School, and, as a ‘particular favour,’ requested that the latter, who was rather incorrigible, should be frequently ‘well thrashed.’ The considerate parent must have been rather nonplussed by Mr. Donald’s reply: ‘Can’t afford to thrash a boy at 4s. 6d. a quarter!’

Parenthetically it may be remarked that this request, coming from the quarter it did, presents a curious phase of human nature. Mr. Donald, subsequent to the interview mentioned, elicited the fact that the father, however valiant in speech, was so soft and indulgent in action, as to be unable ever to bring himself to administer personally any thrashing whatever to his son, although that youth was undoubtedly one requiring a good deal of attention in this way.

Despite Mr. Donald’s vigorous discipline or, perhaps, in some instances, rather because of it, exploits occurred from time to time which proved how little the iron of an occasional thrashing had entered into the souls of some of his pupils.

We recall one of these exploits with mingled feelings of satisfaction and disgust,—satisfaction at the circumstance that it brought us a half-holiday, and disgust at—ah, well!

We trust that, at this late hour,—twenty years, at least, since the occurrence of the incident,—no harm will ensue if we venture to state that, although the actual culprit (or culprits) was never distinctly traced, William Cameron, George Buchanan, and others, who were then our leading men, were generally considered to have a pretty accurate guess of who he or they were.

A number of senior pupils were, one cold morning,

while receiving their lessons, ranged in a crescent on the east side of the old school, about midway down the room, with the ends of the crescent turned in the opposite direction. Those pupils who formed the apex of this arc were near the fireplace on that side of the room. A fire was burning brightly in it at the time. Unfortunately for the ends of justice, as the sequel will show, a good deal of 'trapping' was going on in the class: it is perhaps well to explain that trapping was our expression for the precedence in position taken by a pupil for answering correctly those questions in which his fellows had failed.

In the course of the lesson a strong, nauseous smell was felt permeating the school, and, as if by natural instinct, every one present knew in a moment the vile sap in combustion—assafetida, known to us then by another name, perhaps not equally scientific, but a good deal more expressive. Beside himself with fury, Mr. Donald roared out to the lad nearest the fire to 'take the tongs and remove that abomination instantly!' Pretending to obey his order with all alacrity, the lad got up the tongs, gave the gum a push farther into the fire, and then fumbling with the tongs for a little, looked round, with a suppressed laugh on his face, to say that 'the tongs would not catch it.' It needed no generalship 'to take in the situation,'—noses were sufficient on that occasion, and Mr. Donald saw, or smelt, that the case was hopeless. However unwilling he is in general to turn his back on friend or foe, there was no help for it at that time; and so, in choking accents, he coughed through his handkerchief, 'Well! somebody, I'll warrant, will pay smartly for this. In the meantime, however, you had better all go home, and come back at one o'clock as usual!'

By whom this scurvy trick was perpetrated was, as we have said, never distinctly traced, and the reckoning is still to be arranged for, if it ever has to be paid.

It is frequently a matter of remark with Mr. Donald, that his observation shows, almost without exception, that boys having an intimate acquaintance with the cardinal doctrines of our religious belief, and who have been given to talk, with fatal facility, as to sanctification, effectual calling (in naming these doctrines when relating his experience in this way, Mr. Donald can rarely resist the temptation to pronounce them through his nose), and so on, have usually exhibited parts and qualities opposed not only to a Christian walk and conversation, but even to those characteristics exemplified by people laying claim only to native honesty, amiability, and principle, without reference to anything pertaining to a higher life.

To us there appears no reason whatever why the diametrically reverse should not be the result of the acquaintance indicated, even although we have before us the poet's *dicta*, that—

' Knowledge and wisdom, far from being one,
Have oftentimes no connection.'

—COWPER.

In this, however, as in most other matters, Mr. Donald is ready to clench his statement by 'facts and figures,' and some of these facts and figures are certainly very amusing. The following one or two are the only instances we shall relate, having an eye to economy in space.

Donald Frater (this is not exactly the boy's name, which we withhold for sufficient reasons; the reader will, however, if a former pupil of the school,

readily recognise an old acquaintance under a new name), besides being, for his age and opportunities, rather an adept in caligraphy, was *par excellence* one who shone in Biblical knowledge. It was in practising the former ken that he displayed the anomaly we have just mentioned.

It was a strict rule of Mr. Donald, that in the event of a pupil being absent for half a day or more, such absence should be accounted for in a written line from the pupil's father or mother, or other guardian. This, then, was the field for the play of Frater's genius. Not only did he frame written apologies accounting satisfactorily for his own absences (which were rather frequent), but, with unfailing urbanity, he was ready to oblige any and everybody else in the same way. 'Father dead?'—'No; but away from home.' 'Then the line must be from your mother.' And as far as appearances went, the line, manufactured there and then, *was* from the mother; for in a neat, angular hand, Frater, forging the *materfamilias'* signature, explained in motherly terms how one of those urgent incidents, which *will* obtrude themselves upon people, prevented her dear John or Jemima (as the case required) from being at school that forenoon, a circumstance deeply regretted by the writer, and which, so far as circumstances were under her control, would never, etc.

Perhaps not the least laughable part of the farces thus occasioned were the spasmodic efforts of those endeavouring to fire the balls cast for them by Frater to conceal the manufacturer's name.

Painful experience had led them to see the inexpediency of fathering the fibs upon the stock company at home, and the result in many cases ~~was~~ that,

under Mr. Donald's searching glance and interrogatories, authorship of the lines was assigned to some indulgent uncle or aunt resident in England (vaguely), or (definitely) in Thurso, Stornoway, or some other un-get-at-able locality in the extreme north or west of Scotland—the North Pole, probably owing to their doubts as to that region being habitable, appeared to be considered by most of them rather too cool a joke to be hazarded. In this way was frequently elicited the disinterestedness of some aunts and uncles, evinced in making long and tedious journeys, enlivened only by a sense of duty and sea-sickness, for no other ostensible reason than to write these lines, and then returning home without taking time even to leave their correct address behind them.

Miss Margaret MacCallum—a young lady who has for many years, first in the capacity of a pupil-teacher, and subsequently as a certificated teacher in control of the initiatory and industrial classes, done excellent service in St. Rollox School—relates that one morning she had, to her great amusement and astonishment, put into her hands, by a girl who had been absent the day before, a note to this effect: '*Pleas excus the bear!*' Another amusing apology, tendered *viva voce* by a little urchin to Mrs. Donald, is worth relating. That lady when collecting, one Monday morning, the school fees of the junior pupils, inquired of the boy referred to why he had not his fee. In reply he staggered her thus: 'Please, ma'am, ma faither's got the bag!' and observing from Mrs. Donald's look of bewilderment her ignorance of the local slang, he hastened to put his apology into, as he thought, more appropriate and polite language, by adding: 'I meant to say he's

got the kick!' On giddily finding her way to Mr. Donald, she learned, no less to her relief than surprise, that the mysterious calamities of the boy's 'faither' resolved themselves into dismissal from his employment.

As a companion to Frater's instance, although not illustrative of the same anomaly, may be related a characteristic peculiarity of a boy who will be easily recognised under the fanciful *alias* of George Crowne.

George had the fortune, or misfortune, to be the son of perhaps as respectable and conscientious a man and woman as ever breathed the impure air of St. Rollox. Both attended to their stationery business in Castle Street, and presented to the world around them the grateful spectacle of a douce, comfortable, and God-fearing man and wife. Their son George was comfortable in no sense; and whatever physique he may have acquired since, he was then, as a boy, rather slender, had piercing black eyes, and the general air of a lad 'too clever by half.'

His propensity to overreach himself was usually manifested in the following way:—On account of the very limited accommodation in the old school of St. Rollox, a collection of slates heaped high on one another was by no means an uncommon sight. The liability of such a heap to topple to the ground, and lessen its bulk by leaving a good few broken slates on the floor, will readily suggest itself. George, however, not only fully recognised this exhibition of the laws of gravitation, but, either intentionally or carelessly, frequently gave the heap an *impetus* to fall by jostling against it; and ere the avenging Nemesis had time to ejaculate the familiar question, 'Who did that?' George,

with the utmost effrontery and *sang froid*, was wont to stand up, and, pointing to some boy or girl conveniently near the scene of disaster, but as innocent of its cause as of eating the steaming dinner they were then probably dreaming about, exclaim, ‘Macdonald, sir!’ or the name of whatever unfortunate victim happened to be in suitable vicinity.

We regret to say, truth compels us to record that this cool dodge was too often successful in averting from himself and in bringing upon others the punishment he justly merited, and thus, so far so good for George. But, if baulked in this way, justice in a sterner form did not fail to reach him through another avenue; for, as his ill star would have it, he was fool enough to bring his accusations, in the way shown, most commonly home to Murdoch Cameron. Now Murdoch was ‘an ugly customer to quarrel with,’ in more ways than one. He was broad and stoutly built, firm and compact, did not fear ‘a brush,’ and, unmistakeably, had a temper of his own. George’s fate may thus be readily guessed. Without a wince or a tear Murdoch paid the penalty due by George, but casting every now and again sidelong looks at the latter which ‘spoke volumes,’ each significantly entitled, ‘I bide my time.’ That time was at mid-day or four o’clock in the afternoon, when school was dismissed; and when it came, George had reason to bewail the brevity of time. No sooner did he show face on the street than he was collared, and pummelled in a way which showed the flogging he had escaped in school comparatively ‘a flea bite,’ and which, we fear, kept him throughout the night feeling uneasily for the soft bits of his bed, while he mournfully reflected that honesty was perhaps the best policy after all.

Apropos of this feature of lying exemplified by some children, we cannot refrain from giving here the narrative of a boy and girl, brother and sister, in whom this ill-favoured plant was in full bloom. We are scarcely sorry to premise that they at no time were pupils of St. Rollox School.

Both were palefaced, self-possessed, precocious looking children. They were very frequently absent; and although our friend, their teacher, did not, unlike Mr. Donald, invariably insist on their producing 'lines' to account for their absence, he was strict enough in calling for his pupils' verbal explanations.

The two children referred to were never found without perhaps more than sufficient reason for their repeated absences; for it was a peculiarity of such reasons that they were generally of the most serious nature, such as the illness of some one at home from typhoid or other infectious fever—in one instance they specified cholera.

The victim of these catching epidemics was, according to the statements of the brother and sister, most frequently their poor aged grandmother. 'If half the little imps said of that same grandmother were true,' ejaculated their teacher in relating this story to us, 'she must have had a crack constitution; for within as many months she had successfully weathered half a dozen such storms as typhus, typhoid, scarlet, and gastric fevers, cholera, and small-pox!' Our friend remarked that, when they observed him fall back a pace or two to increase the distance between him and them on hearing such announcements, these hopeful juveniles were wont to show their teeth in a broad smile, even while relating their poor gran'mamma's dire afflictions. The last-named disease, however, brought her to her haven of rest; but, alas! not for good. After

an absence of two or three days her two grandchildren returned to school, and in reply to their teacher's inquiry, stated that their grandmother had had the small-pox and *was dead*. 'Upon my word, I was downright glad to hear it,' remarked our friend; 'for although I had never seen her in the flesh, I was grown heart-sick and tired of her continually-recurring deadly maladies, and hated her cordially.' But her demise, if a thing of beauty, was not to be a joy for ever; for some weeks after, when the same pupils had been absent for a few days, they apologised for their absence by stating that their grandmother had been laid up with scarlatina! On being reminded that they had said before that she was dead, they seemed for a moment under the influence of scarlatina themselves; but it was only for a moment, for, promptly recovering her self-possession, the sister, with an assuring smile, exclaimed, 'Oh, no! she didna dee *that* twist!'

James G—h—m, a lad who *was* a pupil of our school, manifested his lying disposition in perhaps even a worse light than that just shown.

Very frequently playing truant, in the afternoons especially, his explanation of his absence invariably was, that he had been visiting his mother's grave. Now, however little he may give expression to it, we know there is a perennial flow of sentiment in Mr. Donald which rendered, and would still render, James' excuse amply sufficient. But one may have too much even of a good thing, and James' absences on the score named became so unpleasantly frequent that suspicion as to the *bona fides* of his excuses was aroused, and a watch having been set upon him, their falseness was proved uncontestedly. On the next occasion on which he tendered his touching but lying

plea, the lustiness of his cries under the application of his teacher's strap sounded very much like a protest against the advice of Coriolanus to Virgilia :

‘Tis fond¹ to wail inevitable strokes,
As ‘tis to laugh at them.’

—SHAKESPEARE.

To stimulate exertion and activity in his pupils, it was part of Mr. Donald's system, in teaching arithmetic, to read out the same exercises to all those in the same stage of advancement, and cause the pupils, as they completed each exercise, to range themselves in lines down the floor of the school. As an inducement to extra effort and care, the scholar who was first on the line, and correct in his exercise, counted three marks, the second, two, and all after the second, one, if correct, which marks were registered, and formed the means of deciding the prizes for arithmetic. By this arrangement two incentives to assiduity were offered, one being that just mentioned, the other to avoid being left alone in the unpleasant predicament of sitting on the otherwise empty forms in full view of one's fellows all drawn up in a line. We should add that these two incentives were frequently supplemented by a third, embodied in the forms of our teacher's birch and ‘chaff.’ Respecting the first, we sometimes have thought it a curious exemplification of the subtle connection between mind and body, how, when a strap or cane played with a smart, tingling sensation about our bare feet, or the calves of our legs, a telegraphic message worded in the most urgent phraseology seemed to be despatched, with excellent effect, to the muddled brain, clarifying that latter instantly, and giving the pen of a ready writer to the erewhile sluggish fingers.

¹ Foolish.

Regarding the second, Mr. Donald's *bardinage*, it was scarcely less irritating than the action of his strap or cane, although appealing to the senses through a different avenue. Sometimes, to our supreme discomfort, we found both forms of supplementary incentive conjoined. The latter was an unbroken flow of sarcastic witticisms, which not unseldom took shape as follows:—‘Well! it baffles me to comprehend how any one, even with one eye made of cork and the other stuffed with rags, can fail to see the whole thing at a glance’ (!); or, ‘Oh! take your time; don't be in a hurry! Lots of time to do them leisurely between this and six o'clock to-night;’ whereby we had the inviting prospect held out to us of being detained for extra lessons when the other scholars had got free to engage in the more enjoyable exercises of eating, drinking, and playing.

The concentrated attention given by his pupils in taking down such arithmetical exercises, the patterning sound of the pencils on the slates like that of a violent hailstorm, the rush to secure the coveted priority on the floor, must have constituted, to a teacher of Mr. Donald's temperament, scenes the most interesting, music glad and grateful as that of summer rain falling and sparkling on flowers and foliage.

On one occasion, our ardour in this respect resulted in an effect somewhat calculated to cool our teacher's. We may mention here (in strict confidence, of course) that Mr. Donald *smokes*. We ourselves, knowing so well the genial atmosphere of St. Rollox, have long been of opinion that to add the fumes and smell of tobacco to the charms of that locality is altogether a work of supererogation. But still Mr. Donald *smokes*, and therefore carries, or at any rate carried at that

time, a box of matches. This inflammable commodity happened, on the occasion we refer to, to be in an outside pocket of a summer overcoat which usually characterized his outdoor appearances then, and which he had suspended on a peg beside the position allotted as the goal for ‘first done.’ Reverence, we presume, for the wearer had preserved the coat from molestation, until, in a scramble between two or three boys asserting their equal claims for precedence, one or other of them came against the pocket having the match-box in it, and ere many minutes had elapsed, down fell the remains of the overcoat—a handful of charred rags!

An incident which occurred some years since in Dumfries Academy—where a system of teaching arithmetic, similar in its miscellaneous aspect, at any rate, to the system pursued by Mr. Donald, appears to have obtained—is worth recording.

Mr. M—nn, the then teacher of mathematics in that academy, and who now holds a similar appointment in a leading school ‘not a hundred miles’ from the Calton Hill, Edinburgh, has all his life long been short-sighted, and—an Irishman. A friend of ours related to us that, presuming on this infirmity of short-sightedness, his pupils were in the habit of frequently perpetrating practical jokes upon him; our friend was guilty of one as follows:—In the brief intervals elapsing between his own expeditious, and his fellows’ less expeditious, ciphering, our friend, then a pupil of Mr. M.’s, had traced a clear outline of a donkey’s head on his slate, and having taken a few congenial spirits into confidence to share his fun, waited a suitable opportunity to play it off. This arrived soon after, during the same lesson. Happening to be first done with his question, he rushed up, slate in hand, to the coveted

goal. When all the class had found their way to the line on floor, Mr. M. sauntered up to our friend at the top, and told him to 'show him his slate.' Keeping the ciphered side to himself, the young vagabond presented the donkey's head to his teacher, who, all unconscious of the comedy being enacted, goggled learnedly at it, and after using his fingers as if doing the question mentally himself, called out firmly: 'It's right you are, my bhoy! count tree. Rade out the answer!'

In a different form, but following the same system as noticed to have been pursued by Mr. Donald in teaching arithmetic, we found ourselves spurred on in every other department of our school work. There was no evasion possible under the searching, winnowing sifting to which we were regularly subjected at his hands. Any attempt at pre-arrangement on the part of the scholars, so as to place themselves in natural order to receive certain questions which they might suppose themselves best able to answer, was sure to come to nought, and bring its promoters to grief. When such schemes were attempted, as sometimes they were, it seemed as if he divined our plan by a sort of instinct; for instead of commencing at the end usually considered the head of the class, to our consternation he quietly began at the foot, sometimes in the middle of the class.

The contrast offered in this vivacious system to that indicated in the following incident,—alleged to have occurred in a country school in the north during a governmental examination,—induces us to give the incident a corner here. The story is credited to a well-known gentleman, one of H. M. school inspectors —whether rightly or wrongly, we cannot determine.

After a fruitless effort to find some redeeming traits in the school referred to, the inspector, in despair, delegated his examining duties to the teacher himself, who thereupon, with great alacrity, announced : ‘ Now we will take a Bible lesson,’ on hearing which his scholars quietly fell into order. ‘ We shall begin with the Godhead,’ premised the teacher. ‘ Of course you all know there are three persons in the Godhead. Now I wonder if you can tell me these correctly ? Head boy—name the first One ? ’ ‘ God the Father.’ ‘ Quite correct. Next boy—name the second One ? ’ ‘ God the Son.’ As the teacher’s evil genius would have it, the class had hitherto been always ranged in the same order, as had also the questions in the Bible lessons, and the boy who should have taken the next question happened to be absent that day. Accordingly, when the stereotyped question came, ‘ Next boy—name the third Person ? ’ the absentee’s representative, solicitous for the smooth going of the class machinery, ingenuously replied : ‘ Please, sir, the boy that says the Holy Ghost is no here th’ day ! ’ We leave the *dénouement* to the reader’s imagination.

Although by no means a migratory class of people, the circumstance of the population in St. Rollox being exclusively engaged in manufactures, combined with the fluctuations of trade, necessarily causes that population to have, to some extent, a floating character. In this way men from various parts of the iron-producing districts of England and other quarters of the country import themselves into the locality as the exigencies of their trade demand, and *vice versa*. In like manner the characteristics of the schools in the district vary, the pupils necessarily leaving or enter-

ing the district with their parents. For the same reason our school has always had a large admixture of children from England and Ireland. It has also had, occasionally, coloured representatives from the West Indies, etc. This blending of nationalities gave the school at times rather a curious complexion.

It was, as has been elsewhere mentioned, a feature of the school for reading to be taught through the pupils reciting simultaneously.

It is related of Handel, that he was most particular considerately to spare the ears of his auditors, by causing his orchestra to have their instruments—especially wind—tuned ready for immediate use when the moment to commence his concerts had arrived. On one occasion, when a piece of his own composition was intended to be played for the first time, at a concert graced by the presence of royalty and other high dignitaries, he had, following this rule, caused all the instruments to be nicely tuned and left on the rostrum ready for use. A wag,—whose practical foolery appears to have been largely spiced with malice,—aware of this arrangement, surreptitiously entered the hall and deliberately put every one of the wind instruments out of tune, and tampered with the others so as to render them, for the time being, nearly useless.

When the momentous hour had arrived, and a densely packed, brilliant audience awaited the commencement of the concert, the performers entered *en masse*, and, appropriating their instruments, assumed their seats with an air of mingled complacency and confidence. Their leader, flushed with his position and anticipation of his coming laurels, raised his baton—an action which seemed at once the signal for ‘ready’ to his orchestra and profound silence to auditors. Down came the

baton, and, to Handel's stupefaction and horror, instead of the glorious outburst of harmony breathlessly waited for, there came a medley of discordancy, hideous, we suppose, as any ever heard in bedlam. It is not to our purpose to relate the poor conductor's discomfiture ; but we give the story as aptly illustrative of the experience, on many occasions, of Mr. Donald and his assistants when commencing a reading class, composed of children of the different nationalities we have indicated. Strangely enough, nearly all the pupils hailing from England or Ireland read very loudly and very rapidly, and without the least attempt to give natural expression to the lessons read. Their elocution was generally of the simplest kind conceivable, consisting as it did merely of a high, loud monotone, unbroken by any evidence of punctuation, until the final word of a paragraph was reached, which word was spoken as if it stood at the foot of the *gamut*—considering the monotone to be at the top, and also as if the reader had a tendency to plump down on his seat as he uttered it. Keeping such peculiarities in view, and, in imagination, mingling them with the wailing, droning tones characteristic of children from rural districts ; with the snarling tones, uttered with Celtic accentuation, of children from the Highlands; with the burring tones of children from Motherwell, Wishaw, Holytown, and the surrounding black country; with the unwholesomely sweet tones of Rothesay, Dunoon, and the like; and finally, with the complacent but otherwise indescribable tones of ' rale Gleska,'—the reader will have an idea of the jarring jumbles which saluted the ears of the teachers in our school at the first few rehearsals in reading simultaneously.

Another peculiarity manifested by not a few of the

children imported to St. Rollox was a habit of lapping the last syllables of words over the first syllables of the succeeding words,—a fault which, we presume, would prove even more difficult to eradicate than the monotone in reading. The following laughable incident will give some idea of the defective pronunciation we refer to ; we have endeavoured to show by punctuation the manner in which the replies quoted were given :—

Among other passengers in a third-class compartment of a railway train running a local journey in England were a gentleman and a boy, between whom the following dialogue took place, commencing just as they were entering a pretty long tunnel. ‘ Well, my little fellow, and where do you belong to ? ’ The boy, now invisible in the darkness of the tunnel, replied in a monosyllable, ‘ *Hell* ’sure ! ’ Although rather staggered at this announcement, the former resumed, ‘ Oh ! and what is it you find to do there ? ’ ‘ *I tend ten devils* ! ’ was the short but startling reply. It turned out, as the horrified interrogator pursued his inquiries when daylight had been again attained, that the lad was employed in the small town of Helmshore, and attended to ten iron claws which, worked by machinery, tore rags asunder preparatory to these undergoing the processes necessary to convert them into shoddy, the claws rejoicing under the same euphonious epithet assigned to apprentice printers.

A curious exemplification of the force of habit was given daily by one of the coloured pupils, a boy whose nationality we do not know. Exactly at noon, the hour after which was an interval for lunch, this lad, instead of addressing himself to the transmutation of

bread and butter, as did his fellows, dozed off into a deep sleep. He slept sound as a top until one o'clock, when the rush and tramp of footsteps in his dormitory roused him up, after which, with a shake or two, he was as ready for his work as his neighbours who had devoted the hour to active exercise. His noonday *siestas* in his native land had put their mark upon him pretty plainly.

Teachers must not unseldom find it rather a trying matter to preserve their gravity in the presence of complacently proud *pater* and *materfamilias*, whose children are submitted to have their education 'finished.' Finished in their education at fourteen or fifteen years of age !

Like his *confrères* in his profession, Mr. Donald has had specimens of this *genus* frequently brought under his notice ; and we cannot but think how the suppressed, mischievously cynical expression his eyes assumed when his ears were greeted with this 'finishing' nonsense must have haunted, for many a day and night, the too sanguine, well-meaning simpletons innocently guilty of the fallacy. But perhaps the most staggering request in this respect ever conveyed to him or any other teacher was made one day by a snodly attired Irishwoman, who, with her boy James, called at the school to arrange for the latter's admission as a day pupil, and explained that as 'John (her husband) was getting up in years, he found labouring in the forge too much for him now, and we was a-thinking of starting a pawnbroking business ; and maybe you (Mr. Donald) would give James here a lift on with his schooling,—he is not such a bad scholar already,—teaching him in particular to spell and write the names

of things most commonly pawned, so that he'll be able to keep the books the police examine !'

During the greater part of the years Mr. Donald taught in the old school his health was far from good. He suffered principally, we believe, from a bronchial affection, which at times made speaking very difficult and painful to him. Owing to this, and, we fear, other complaints too, he was occasionally compelled to absent himself from school, and we well remember how, on such occasions, when Miss Nicoll had announced the fact 'that Mr. Donald was unwell, and there was to be no schooling that day,' joy beamed in every eye and prattled on every tongue.

We are not aware whether Mr. Donald was ever apprized of the delight thus indirectly occasioned through his sickness; but we can recollect how he once had ocular demonstration of this, to him, uncomplimentary exhibition of hilarity. One morning he had come, presumably with the intention of teaching, as usual, but finding himself too unwell to proceed, told us so, and that school would consequently be closed until the following day. Judicious consideration for our nether quarters probably restrained those of us within the sweep of his eye from becoming radiant; but turning sharply round, he discovered a boy, Gall (one of three brothers of that name, all pupils in our school), literally chuckling and rubbing his hands in ecstasy over the holiday. What were Mr. Donald's thoughts at the time, in view of this manifestation of James' joy, may be inferred from the circumstance that, there and then, we had related to us by Mr. D. the story of a sympathetic youth, who, upon returning from attending his uncle's funeral, could, for the delight he had experienced in eating them, speak only of the

sponge-cake biscuits dealt out to the mourners ! It is to be hoped the moral castigation James thus received was not without effect.

'To this sure standard make your just appeal ;
Here lies the golden secret,—*learn to feel!*'

On account of the overcrowded state of the old school, the writing-desks, which were of the usual stereotyped class,—unwieldy, clumsy articles, with a constitutional tendency to topple on the slightest pretence, often on no known pretence at all, and an agile facility in 'snecking' one's fingers when handling them,—were placed against the walls, east and west of the school, when not in use for writing. This subject, writing, was taught in the afternoons, when, preparatory to the said desks being drawn out into writing array, the school was cleared for five or ten minutes, a few of the stronger boys being retained to arrange the desks.

During the interval thus obtained, those of our number having an eye to cleanliness in hands and copy-books, were wont to betake ourselves to a common well in the back court of a tenement, since replaced by a larger and more modern erection, next to the south end of the canal bridge, right-hand side going northwards. The distance of this lavatory from the school made our visits to it rather hurried in the short time we had to spare, necessitating the journey to be performed in double-quick time, and our ablutions to be made to the same measure. In a moment of forgetfulness, we, personally, once essayed to wash our *face*, additional to the usual wash to our hands, and had just got well soaped over, when, with painful distinctness, the 'birl' of Mr. Donald's whistle struck

our ears. What *was* to be done ? Present to our mental vision there were but two alternatives, neither of them of the most agreeable description. These were, a thrashing for being five minutes too late ; or, returning in time, to spend the whole afternoon blinking with soap in our eyes. We chose what, at the moment, we thought the least of two evils, viz. to return in time, even although soaped over. Our opinion as to this course being the better was not quite so decided by the time four o'clock had arrived. Shining like a mirror, and, we felt, as liable to crack had we ventured to laugh, we contrived to get into the school with our facial adornment unobserved by any one, and to spend the two mortal hours without coming under the teacher's notice ; but for this immunity our nose and eyes paid a penalty, the disagreeable nature of which has to be experienced to be fully appreciated.

The proximity of the old school to Tennants' chimney, or 'stalk' as it is locally called, frequently gave rise to not a little disquietude in the minds of the scholars, when the equilibrium of the towering pile was threatened either by severe gales or thunderstorms. It is a fact, presumably patent to all residents in St. Rollox, that, during the prevalence of high winds, the chimney sways perceptibly. This circumstance was often viewed in dismay by startled groups of juveniles, through the school windows ; and at other times, when an electrical discharge dislodged a brick or part of the cement, a scream of horror ran through the school. Many of the pupils had fathers, brothers, or other relatives employed in the chemical works, and the knowledge of the supposed danger these loved

ones were exposed to naturally added to the distress of those in the school.

It is related by an old pupil that, on one occasion during a panic of the kind mentioned, caused by a thunderstorm accompanied by heavy rain, our good teacher, Mr. Donald, with a laudable desire to soothe our minds, planted himself in the centre of the school, and calling upon us to draw closer to him, told us ‘not to be afraid, keep close to me and all will be right !’ The story, we think it just to add, is a little improbable, and very unlike the centre figure of it ; but we give it for what it is worth.

It is related that some young wag, who must have been rather a cold-blooded one, one night reported at Blochairn, where a large number of the pupils resided, that the school had been on fire, and was burned to the ground. To borrow a metaphor from the incident, we may say the glad news spread like wildfire, and—

‘There was a sound of revelry that night :
 And Blochairn’s capital had gathered then
 Her beauty and her chivalry ; and bright
 The lamps (paraffin) shone o’er fair women and brave men ;
 A thousand hearts beat happily, and when
 Music arose with its voluptuous swell,
 Glad eyes looked joy to eyes that spake again,
 And all went merry as a marriage bell—
 But hush ! hark ! ’—

for here comes the disagreeable part of the incident, probably that with the point most keenly relished by the vagabond by whom the false alarm was propagated.

After ‘a long lie and a tea-breakfast,’ as Mr. Donald used to talk about, the Blochairn pupils sauntered

leisurely in next morning to feast their eyes on the spectacle of the ruins of the school, when, lo! to their profound amazement and infinite disgust, there stood the school in its entirety, and all its placid, begrimed ugliness. Their mortification, however, did not end here. Arrived at the school door, they heard, from the hum of voices and the teachers' loud tones, that work was in full swing. To play truant in a body was out of the question; some one or other, they thought, was sure to prove a traitor in the camp. Accordingly, up the stair they marched with heavy hearts, and, as the sequel shows, not without reason for their despondency. As they entered they were marshalled in a line; and after the leader, in reply to the inquiry, 'Well, why are you so late?' had explained his too ready credence of the beguiler's tale, and the rest, in whining tones, summarized, 'So did I,' a vigorous application of Mr. Donald's strap to their palms left them with a sensation of having fire in these, at least, without doubt, and they were allowed to take place in their respective classes, consoling themselves, it may be, with the sympathy of numbers.

From the fact, we understand, of a deep-seated disinclination which he had to teaching geography, and the consequent danger of this subject being imperfectly treated to the disadvantage of his pupils, Mr. Donald was in the habit, if not of entering heartily into, at least of vigorously attacking this subject, often undoing his coat for this purpose, and so making his charge in his shirt sleeves.

One sultry, bright afternoon in summer, when our teacher was thus engaged in a valorous sortie upon the disliked science, which he was teaching simultane-

ously to a large class assembled before a map suspended on the south wall of the largest room in the old school, a shuffling sound was heard upon the stair, the cause of which seemed to be well known to every boy and girl in the school; for no sooner had it been repeated than a fearful silence ensued, and, as the common phrase runs, a pin could have been heard falling on the floor. Every eye was directed towards the door whence the shuffling *something* was heard approaching.

'While throng'd the citizens, with terror dumb,
Or whispering, with white lips—The foe ! they come ! they come !'

—BYRON.

After waiting thus in palpitating expectancy for some little time, we heard the shuffling give place to a sort of scrambling on the stair landing, and then a 'glaum,' as our Doric expressively has it, was made at the door handle, which our highly strung sense of sight saw turn slowly round, when the door was gently pushed slowly open, and, to our horror, a long attenuated arm, swathed to the thin finger ends in white elastic cloth, *and only about a foot above the floor*, was protruded through the opening and followed by—not a body, but a long, deep-drawn sigh ! One girl, who stood nearer the door than her fellows, after staring for some moments in entrancing terror on the unsightly object, gave a low, choking cry of 'Mother !' and with twining legs attempted to run to Mr. Donald for protection, but plumped down, like a washing of clothes, before she had accomplished half her journey, and lay helplessly on the floor, unable to rise or crawl. As for Mr. Donald, he seemed rivetted to his stance, whether in disgust or fear we cannot say. When he found voice to exclaim, 'Shut that'—the sentence was

stifled on his lip by the sonorous, rumbling tones of the ‘something’ :—‘ My limb was burned in a coal pit,—help a poor man ! ’ Relief on such easy terms was gladly purchased by a few boys and girls near the unseen ogre, and who were rapidly undergoing a process of petrifaction ; so a few coppers, probably saved at mid-day for a jollification on candy at night, were flung to the stair, and the door slammed after them. The scrambling was resumed, and, after his unexpected windfall had been carefully gathered, to our further dismay our barrel-voiced visitor sung out sonorously : ‘ Thank yez, childers ! God bless yez ! I’ll come back and see yez ahl again ! ’

Schiherazade, in the *Arabian Nights Entertainments*, is made to relate to the Sultan, Shier-ear, the story of a wealthy merchant, who, on his way home after visiting some of his commercial correspondents, ‘ was so much incommoded by the heat of the sun, and the reflection of that heat from the earth, that he turned out of the road to refresh himself under some trees. He found at the root of a large tree a fountain of very clear running water. Having alighted, he tied his horse to a branch, and, sitting down by the fountain, took some biscuits and dates out of his wallet. As he ate his dates, he threw the shells carelessly in different directions. When he had finished his repast, being a good Mussulman, he washed his hands, face, and feet, and said his prayers. Before he had finished, and while he was yet on his knees, he saw a genie, white with age and of a monstrous bulk, advancing towards him with a cimeter in his hand. The genie spoke to him in terrible voice : “ Rise, that I may kill thee with this cimeter, as thou hast killed my son ; ” and accom-

panied these words with a frightful cry. The merchant, being as much alarmed at the hideous shape of the monster as at his threatening language, answered him, trembling, "Alas! my good lord, of what crime can I be guilty towards you, that you should take away my life?" "I will," replied the genie, "kill thee, as thou hast killed my son." "Heavens!" exclaimed the merchant, "how could I kill your son? I never knew, never saw him." "Did not you sit down when you came hither?" demanded the genie; "did you not take dates out of your wallet, and as you ate them, did you not throw the shells about in different directions?" "I did all that you say," answered the merchant; "I cannot deny it." "If it be so," resumed the genie, "I tell thee that thou hast killed my son; and in this manner: when thou wert throwing the shells about, my son was passing by, and thou didst throw one into his eye, which killed him; therefore I must kill thee." "Ah! my lord! pardon me!" cried the merchant. "No pardon!" exclaimed the genie; "no mercy!"

It will not be so familiarly known to our readers that an evil genie, who must surely be a direct descendant of the merchant's friend, occasionally looks up poor dominies. The age of visible supernatural appearances being past, the dominies' genie is obliged to content himself by appearing as an *influence* only; but that he exists there can be no doubt, as the following incidents conclusively prove:—

'Mexty me!' exclaimed Mr. Donald's servant girl, Lily, one day; 'mexty me! tae think that 'am gaun tae Branford's' (this substitute for the real name will be sufficiently suggestive) 'day after day, an' payin' them the highest price for ev'rything, an' efter a' their

things are nae better than Macpherson's, at oor very door, wha disna' charge half the price for his provisions that Branford dis.'

'As she was standing in the lobby,' says Mr. Donald, 'when she said this, ready with her basket to go out her messages, and I was shaving myself in a bedroom, near the half open door of which was Lily, I called out, unthinkingly, "Lily! just go for your provisions wherever you get them best and cheapest." This advice proved scarcely the best and cheapest, so far as it affected me; for, at the quarter's end, a few days after this occurrence, the whole of Brandford's children —there were three of them—were withdrawn from the school, and from sundry inuendoes, I understood that my implied inefficiency as a teacher was accounted for by the moral delinquency shown in changing my grocer.'

Another case will suffice to establish this doctrine of the existence of the dominies' evil genie.

After much care and discrimination, apparent to all of us at the time, on Mr. Donald's part, to award a prize in the highest class, and when the leet of best scholars had been reduced to two boys, who shall here be nameless, the honour was accorded to the elder of the two. Our prizes were at no time of much pecuniary value,—any value they had consisting more in the honour carried in their award,—and although this was well known, equally so as the care and impartiality exercised in ascertaining to whom such honour was due, the defeated candidate, together with three or four brothers, was immediately taken away from the school. The date shells had done their deadly work.

Reflection on the pecuniary loss, to say nothing as to the loss of favour, thus unwittingly and innocently

incurred by Mr. Donald, suggests the extent of what such a disaster would have been had a genie, devoted, as shown, to the benefit of dominies, been located in the home of Mr. James Fenwick. Who the Fenwicks are, none in any way connected within the last twelve or fifteen years with our school need to be told.

Margaret, the eldest daughter, served her five years' apprenticeship as a pupil-teacher in the school, retiring on the completion of that term from the profession ; and we understand that Mr. Donald now counts among his numerous scholars the *eighth* daughter of this family, all of whom—the eight—have received their education in full in St. Rollox School. How many more may be forthcoming is not quite certain ; but whether few or many, they are sure to Mr. Donald, if the only cause of hindrance to their entrance or continuance with him can be sought in some groundless offence ; for good sense and staidness are not the least of the virtues possessed in common by the entire family, *i.e.* those of them not in the nursery. We shall hope in confidence for the quality, ay, and the quantity, of those of the tag end of this family.

We have elsewhere in these pages alluded to the school in Garngad Road conducted by Mr. Thomson. Many of his pupils doubtlessly retain as lively and pleasant reminiscences as ourselves of their school days ; and we imagine their encounters in battle array with the pupils of St. Rollox School, when that was in Castle Street, form not the least item in these reminiscences. What the Philistines hailing from Mr. Thomson's establishment lacked in point of numbers, they unquestionably made up in pluck ; and having generally one or two, if not Goliaths, at least brave

dare-devils, who laughed at a shower of 'Macadam,' sometimes iron 'slag,' as did the original Goliath at David's pebbles from the running brook, the tide of battle was, in our 'shindies,' frequently not a little doubtful; and we are constrained to own that, had the contending parties been at all equal in numbers, the side on which we ourselves were found must often have 'failed to answer time,' if we may be permitted to use a phrase more suggestive than elegant. Our side, however, usually carried the day, through the powerful help of a sort of 'light brigade,' generally consisting of thirty or forty boys armed with odd pieces of wood (we cannot at this late hour even guess where these were obtained), walking sticks, umbrella handles, rulers, basket switches, and the like. Although mounted only on 'shankyneggies,' and at no time able to muster 'the six hundred,' this body, unencumbered with the duty of flinging stones, charged nobly and right well. They were sometimes held in reserve until our opponents indicated a tendency to waver, either from fatigue or fear. That moment arrived, the order was given—(in effect), 'Up, guards, and at them!'—(in reality), 'A' thegither! a' thegither!' and, as good fortune would have it,—unlike 'the six hundred,'—they never found that

'Some one had blundered ;'

for the speedy retreat of our foes within the enclosure fronting Mr. Thomson's School was almost invariably the result of their timeous charge, leaving us in undisputed possession (but for the police) of the road, and free to chant our war-song, with the refrain familiar to all :—

' We are the boys for kicking up a row,
 Kicking up a row, kicking up a row ;
 We are the boys for kicking up a row,
 Quite contrarie, quite contrarie ! ' etc.,—

a performance we never neglected.

As may easily be conceived, these 'engagements' sometimes resulted in serious injury to those sharing in them. We remember distinctly of several of our fellow-soldiers having received 'ugly gashes' on the face, and in one or two instances of arms (human ones) having been broken. As for the injuries inflicted on the opposite side, or upon the unoffending public unfortunate enough to get in our way, we knew little, and, we fear, cared less, holding probably by the old adage, that 'all is fair in love and war.' It is with grateful emotion we record our entire exemption, personally, from any of these unpleasant contingencies.

In connection even with such unimportant matters as these stone battles of school children, the wonders wrought by time, in its ever-revolving kaleidoscope, have been manifested in our agreeable experience.

Not the least redoubtable champion of the Thomsonites was James Longmore. In these days, when most people rejoice under a plurality of Christian names, James might appropriately have added Stoutmore to his. He was of more than average size for his age, and physically well developed in every respect. He had a ruddy, fresh complexion, auburn hair, and eyes which, in their self-possessed, complacent, and yet half-defiant look, bespoke an utter absence of fear. Such a boy, it will be seen, would prove an acquisition to any belligerent host, and we know that he was very much one to his side when a pupil in Mr. Thomson's

School. His parents, however, made him change sides, by transferring him to the tutorial care of Mr. Donald, and it was in this second epoch of James' school life that we became acquainted with him. We cannot remember whether any of the party battles we have mentioned were fought after he entered as our fellow-pupil, nor do we venture to say that had such occurred he would have fought against his former comrades-in-arms ; but we do remember vividly that to us personally he was a close friend and unflinching companion. 'The race is not to the swift, nor the battle to the strong.' Despite his splendid physique and great prowess, James died in his boyhood.

Perhaps a more striking instance is afforded in the case of John P. Young. He was known to us in our school-days as John Young ; but as he has arrived at the conclusion (no doubt, by an arithmetical process) that John Youngs are as plentiful, or—to quote himself—'as common as twopenny pies,' he now claims his P to write before his patronymic.

Reflecting on his retiring, amiable disposition, we can hardly conceive John as ever having been redoubtable during the time he was with Mr. Thomson ; his part in our joint *melées*, which he no doubt had, would more probably be like Paul's at Stephen's martyrdom ; or if he at any time engaged in active hostilities, it would, in all likelihood, be by flinging an occasional stone—girl fashion—aimed with deadly precision to miss those whom he intended to strike, and which, if it failed to fall upon his own innocent pate, would be pretty sure to hit those of his own side immediately in front of him.

But if scarcely a warrior on the field of battle, John

was no laggard in his studies, but rather one of our leading pupils.

Along with some others of the more advanced boys, he acted for some time as a monitor, and as a pupil himself excelled in grammar. If our memory serve us right, he gained, in contest with Adam Gilchrist, the first prize for grammar—in which subject, after long and close examination, they seemed equal—by answering accurately the test question, ‘What is the gender of man, in the phrase, “Man is mortal”?’ which Adam gave as masculine, John correctly giving it as common gender.

His qualifications acquired since his school-days almost entitle him to the designation of an admirable Crichton. He is a skilled and experienced draughtsman, a painter in oil and water-colours—his abilities in this second respect being evidenced by his ‘Old Man of Hoy,’ which had a place on the walls of the galleries of the Royal Scottish Academy in their 49th exhibition in Edinburgh; he is a poet, a certificated musician, a shorthand writer, and excels in speaking to mutes by means of their own alphabet of signs. It is with pleasure we particularize the changes wrought by time in our histories, in drawing attention to the circumstance that the lithographs in the first pages of this book are the handiwork of this our former rival in war, now appearing in these as our fellow-labourer in this work of love.

The reference made to Mr. Young’s proficiency in speaking by means of signs recalls to our memory a touching narrative, which we heard Mr. Donald relate. It scarcely comes within the scope of reminiscences relating to St. Rollox School, but as it does relate to

one doubtlessly well remembered by many of our old schoolfellows, we presume to give the story a place here; we think we give Mr. Donald's narrative *verbatim* in the following:—

‘ My little daughter Jeanie, although once able to speak, eventually, when only a child (as she died), became dumb. Aggravating her condition in this respect was the circumstance that she had a protracted inflammation in the eyes, which threatened to deprive her of sight altogether. (She did, in fact, lose her sight for some months, but afterwards recovered.)

‘ In anticipation of this second calamity, I had begun to teach her to understand what I wished to convey to her mind by a series of touches on her body in various parts, and it was surprising how, latterly, she came to comprehend what was thus communicated to her.

‘ Her general health becoming impaired, we sent her to an uncle she had resident in Ireland, hoping the change of air would have a beneficial effect upon her. After having been some time there, her uncle had to leave for London, and, in consequence, she had to return home. It was arranged that I should meet them both in Belfast, where I could take Jeanie under my care. Arriving there, I found they had not reached the spot we had agreed to meet at; but, sauntering through the town, I unexpectedly came up with them. My poor girl—blind, deaf, and almost dumb—was altogether unconscious of my presence at her side, until, stooping down, I fingered my signs upon her arm, when instantly she exclaimed, “ Father!” and then, as if not fully assured, she motioned me to hold down my head, and felt my beard, when a smile breaking over her face made known her certainty of, and gratification at our meeting.’

James Young, a brother of John, just mentioned, had one or two characteristics, which made him, until better known to one, perhaps a little unpleasant.

He was (and is) of a quiet, self-possessed manner, and when a pupil of St. Rollox School had a sort of complacently cynical expression in his eyes, which was a source of discomfort to almost every assistant teacher who came to the school. So much so, indeed, was this the case, that Mr. Donald relates having buttonholed these assistants, and, pointing out James, told them he felt it right—alike for their own and James' comfort—to explain that he (James) was not at all of the sinister disposition expressed in his eyes, and that they need not take notice of it. Mr. Donald further relates that, prior to adopting this plan, James' expression (looked) of 'Go on, young man, and show us whether you are able for your work or not—I think most probably you are not,'—was often the subject of complaint with his assistants.

Another agreeable characteristic James possessed was that of walking arm-in-arm with his schoolfellows; but before or as preliminary to assuming this peaceful attitude, he invariably quietly seized the biceps of the arm about to be honoured, and digging and working the ends of his fingers in it, made his hapless and helpless victims wriggle in a sort of St. Vitus' dance until the little bit of pleasantry was over, when, without a word of apology or explanation (eventually we ceased looking for either), he dropped the tingling member, and assumed the quiet, smiling, cynical expression we have alluded to.

Among the names of our old schoolfellows which we recall with delight (and these are not a few) we

mention here, with a present feeling of sadness, that of Gavin Wilson.

Gavin could scarcely be called a genial lad, being of rather a quiet turn. But his was a high-toned, generous soul, with a contempt, almost infinite, even while he was a lad, for everything mean and sordid. He devoted his attention, after some years' service as a clerk, to oil painting, and but for his early decease would have taken a fair standing in his art.

We well remember, as he himself related it, what was partly the precipitating cause or climax which decided him in becoming a painter. His salary as a clerk was a very moderate one, a quality all too common, unfortunately, to most clerks' salaries, and having completed a year's service at his pittance, he thought he had a case with which to approach his employer for an increase. This *imperium in imperio* in his own little sphere was 'astonished at the demand, it was so preposterous,' and dismissed Gavin from his room without acceding to the application. The following morning Gavin's resignation was tendered by him personally, and received with only a short, contemptuous laugh, and a shrug of the shoulders; but while he was leaving the room, his employer condescended to call him back (probably out of sheer curiosity, without the least element of anxiety in it) to ascertain what Gavin intended doing. 'Turn painter.' This announcement was almost too much for the magnate's risibility; but, pulling down his brows, and chewing his laugh, he contrived to behave himself in a way, and said: 'A weel, whan yer a while et it, ye can mak a pictur and bring't tae me on sicht—maybe I'll buy't.' Gavin never did *mak* that 'pictur.' 'Death has been busy,' says the *Glasgow Bailie* for Wednesday, 31st March

1875, ‘in artistic circles of late. . . . Then came Gavin Wilson, an efficient and hard-working member of the teaching staff at the School of Arts. . . . Poor Wilson was greatly liked by all who knew him, and as a landscape painter was giving good promise of future excellence. Last season he was working about Strathyre and Balquhidder, and his work there showed great progress. There are two of his pictures in this Exhibition (Glasgow).’

It is related that at the burial of a German in the churchyard of his native village, his friends stood round his open grave, with every disposition to speak—in accordance with the custom of the place—a kindly laudation of their departed brother’s good qualities. What these good qualities had been no one seemed to know, for, in fact, the departed brother had been altogether a most selfish, bad man; but *de mortuis nil nisi bonum*. An awkward silence ensued, and for some time it seemed as if the usual tribute to the dead were not forthcoming on this occasion; when one of the bystanders, rousing himself apparently from a deep reverie, and with an air that implied he deserved not a little credit for discovering *one* good thing in the deceased’s character, exclaimed: ‘He was a good smoker!’

Speaking of Gavin, a few days after his death, with some of his old schoolfellows, no such difficulty as the German’s friends experienced was felt by us; but in mentioning his *many* good qualities, all bore witness that ‘he was a good bowler.’ Gavin was a keen cricketer, and bowled so well that his ‘play’ rarely failed to ‘take’ even with an indifferent batsman.

Another schoolfellow, Thomas Duncanson, presents himself in this connection.

Thomas had a long official connection with St. Rollox School. He spent several years in it as a pupil,—we believe it was the only regular day school he ever attended,—then became a pupil-teacher in it, rising on the completion of his apprenticeship, and subsequent training in the Established Church Normal School, to the rank of assistant teacher, which last position he filled for seven years with distinction to himself and entire satisfaction to his employer.

Alike as a pupil and a teacher, Tom's *forte* lay in mathematics. He excelled particularly in geometry; so much so, indeed, that during his training in the Established Church Normal School, it was considered there a waste of his time to place him in any class for that subject. One result of this honourable exemption was, that he had not a little difficulty in obtaining his certificate as a teacher, being unable to show that he had attended the geometry class!

We ought to add that he had another *forte*, one which commended him even more strongly to his schoolfellows than did his proficiency in mathematics. That *forte* was, and we are sure is, his ability to be the friend of all, the enemy of none. Our recollection of him as a boy is to the effect that it was simply impossible to quarrel with him. We might hurt him in play, as we daresay we often did, but no one, we think, can be able to recall his ever having hurt in return. This amiable quality of Tom served also to keep him clear of all our scrapes, for he was no less solicitous to stand well with his teachers than with his schoolfellows. Unlike most boys who have this facility of avoiding their comrades' troubles, he was never known to turn crown evidence against his little sinning mates. We were all proud to own, in our

felicitous, yet unpretending phraseology, that Tom was ‘ever game not to blab or spout on his chums.’ We feel disposed to put a big flourish round Tom’s name.

It was Mr. Donald’s wont, during Tom’s apprenticeship as a pupil-teacher, to bring his apprentices together at night by way of assisting them in the prosecution of their own studies, requisite, among other reasons, to enable them to pass the annual examination to which they were subjected at the hands of Her Majesty’s inspector.

The circumstance of Tom’s attendance at this evening class was well known to a number of the older male pupils of the school, who took advantage of it to give him a fright.

Among the perpetrators of this practical joke were, if we were not misinformed at the time, David Gray, John Crawford, Gavin Wilson, and some other three boys. Duly armed with the inevitable white sheet, these waited Tom’s return one evening, and as he passed a hedge which skirted the pathway leading up to his father’s residence, pounced out, and, in addition to the fright given him by means of the sheet, administered a little rather rough usage. We could never learn the immediate results of this attack; but one which was witnessed the following night, and, in fact, every night for months thereafter, was amusing enough.

Tom at this time wore a highland cloak or cape, and as this garment concealed the wearer’s hands, it was not observed when he arrived the night following that on which the incident just narrated occurred, that he carried a ponderous, murderous looking staff. But when he had disrobed, and went to deposit the huge

weapon of defence in a corner, with a look which plainly said : ‘ Now, if there are any here who would like a broken head, let them try last night’s trick, and they will be more than satisfied,’ it was impossible to preserve gravity, and he was heartily laughed at. The spectacle, subsequently, of this most unoffending looking being walking regularly into school with a bludgeon that would have proved a burden to an Irishman, and which would probably have been dropped in panic had the least danger of attack presented itself, was often a source of merriment and pleasant banter.

The name of George Patrick, another lad who also was a pupil, and subsequently, for a short time, a pupil-teacher in our school, brings to our recollection an enjoyable companion.

George’s good qualities as a schoolfellow were perhaps a little dashed by his *insouciant* tendency,—a quality the manifestations of which we never had much appetite for; but, even with this slight drawback, we remember George with pleasure; and the remembrance of some evenings we spent together, rambling through the green woods at Langside or strolling along the banks of the Cart, brings with it a coincident remembrance of fresh winds, fragrant mignonette, white vests, and rustling silk dresses.

Robert Hunter, a boy whose school history somewhat resembled George Patrick’s, but whose term of apprenticeship was shortened by death, was our contemporary and close companion. He was a steady, hardworking lad, and withal a genial comrade. His temper was perhaps a little variable, but his cloudy moods could never resist the artillery of good nature,

which had only to play for a short time to dispel the mask of his really generous, hearty disposition. The transition from his sulky moods to good humour was very noticeable and pleasing. In his sulky moods his eyebrows fell heavily, and gave him an unmistakeably cross look; but, as his better nature yielded to our pleasantry, these lifted, his front hair—through the action of his forehead—went back, his lips parted reluctantly, displaying a set of regular, white teeth; at last he would raise his face, on which played a bright smile,—agreeably suggestive of sunshine after gloom,—and yield *carte blanche*.

Robert gave promise of possessing average good abilities for most subjects of learning, and of excelling particularly in none, unless perhaps we except the drawing of diagrams of the structural features of the internal organs of the human body, for which he early evinced a curious *penchant*. Several specimens of his handiwork in this department did duty to Mr. Donald for a long time in illustrating his lessons in the rudiments of physiology.

A neglected cold brought phthisis upon him, under which disease he lingered for about six months, and died in the blessed hope of a glorious resurrection. We had the melancholy satisfaction of being with him, as he sat propped up on his bed and shivering with cold, only a few minutes before his death, and his almost inaudibly whispered words to the author were the last he spoke on earth.

He rests in Sighthill Cemetery. Poor Robert!
sit tibi terra levis.

An incident which would perhaps have been better left untold here, in connection with our acquaintance with Robert, is now related, as after all it does not

display deep-seated depravity, and certainly *does* display in one respect the judicious, watchful manner of our good teacher, Mr. Donald.

It happened that an estrangement, due to an unkind remark which we thoughtlessly dropped to Robert, sprang up between us, resulting in a total cessation of communication of any kind. The circumstance that we were 'not on speaking terms' was soon noticed by Mr. Donald, and doubtlessly proved a source of unpleasantness to him. After a few minor movements towards effecting a reconciliation had failed, he hit upon the expedient of sending us both one morning for a cab to a hiring office which was at the Cross.

If our memory serve us right, we daresay we contrived to walk all the way to the office without either speaking; but when we found ourselves sitting face to face in the cab, the ridiculousness of our conduct seemed to become vividly apparent to us both, for a fusilade of grim smiles and grunted monosyllables opened between us, and soon gave way to a hearty, cheerful conversation. The wall of partition thus happily removed was completely effaced by an incident which would have formed suitable matter for the pen and pencil of Leech. Our route to St. Rollox lay naturally up the High Street. When the Bell o' the Brae was reached, we found that the cab horse, a miserable, emaciated hack, which had laboured fearfully all the way under its comparatively light burden, came to a stand-still, and we were informed by the driver that unless we came out of the cab for a little, further progress was impossible. With a muttered malediction on his cruelty and stupidity we complied with his hint, and getting to the rear of the vehicle, pushed it so vigorously, while cabby wrought at the

wheel, that we fancy the horse must have imagined, if capable of imagination at all, that it had received a new lease of elasticity in its legs. But the idea of hiring a cab and being obliged to supply the motive power for part of the way tickled us, the fares, exceedingly, and the tears rolled down our cheeks with laughter as we pushed and pushed in our efforts to expedite the chariot. We arrived at the school in Garn gad Road a little after mid-day; and it was only when Mr. Donald sent his servant down to pay the cabman and instruct him not to wait, that we perceived the kindly artifice which had sought, this time successfully, to dissipate our estrangement.

William Mackenzie, a pupil-teacher, who served his entire apprenticeship in St. Rollox School and then abandoned the profession, had the reputation among his colleagues of being a wit.

His witticisms were generally uttered in gnomic brevity and terseness, and in a husky, low voice. They might, in fact, be said to squirt rather than flow, and were enhanced by his manner, which was usually pawky, and very pawky when he was perpetrating a joke.

We regret, particularly at this moment, that, generally failing to catch his sayings on account of the manner in which they were spoken, we did not take pains to elicit any of them. The only approach to a joke we ever heard him distinctly enunciate was accompanied by an effect which no doubt impressed it vividly on his own memory.

On a cold winter's morning a group of us were standing round a side fire in the upper hall of the new school, and one was toying with the poker, which had

become red-hot through having been accidentally left in the fire. Mackenzie observing the boy's action, asked him if he could 'singe at first sight?' to which his schoolmate replied, 'He did not know, but would try,' and suiting the action to the word, unintentionally gave Mackenzie a pretty severe burn on the cheek.

But although we failed, as shown, to gather fun from William's pleasantries, we often obtained indirectly not a little amusement from their effects upon others, particularly upon Thomas Duncanson. William was in stature rather short, Thomas rather tall, and the exhibition made by the latter in stooping very much, and, with his ear close to Mackenzie's mouth, drinking in every monosyllable that oracle dropped, while the tears flowed down his cheeks with convulsive laughter, frequently gave more amusement to the rest of us than the jokes would probably have done had they been heard.

A schoolfellow who, in the author's own particular circle of home playmates, exercised great influence, was John Cowan. What John's peculiar advantages or qualifications were which gave him the place, if not the title, of King Kokolorum, we cannot tell; but certain it is that nothing could be done—no bird-nesting, boating, or 'black-biding' (bramble-berrying) expedition could be undertaken—without his *imprimatur* and lead. He was not wont to debate or quarrel with us, still less to appeal to arms, in exercising this influence; but he had us as thoroughly under his rule—a gentle and beneficent rule—as ever mesmerist had his 'subject.' If he originated a walking excursion into the country, which he often did,—when, answering, as it were, to the voice of Spring,—

' Come forth, O ye children of gladness, come !
 Where the violets lie may be now your home ;
 Ye of the rose-lip and dew-bright eye,
 And the bounding footstep, to meet me fly !
 With the lyre and the wreath, and the joyous lay,
 Come forth to the sunshine, I may not stay.

' Away from the dwellings of care-worn men,
 The waters are sparkling in grove and glen !
 Away from the chamber and sullen hearth,
 The young leaves are dancing in breezy mirth !
 Their light stems thrill to the wild-wood strains,
 And youth is abroad in my green domains ;'¹—

we went forth a band of healthy, happy boys,—no matter how early the hour fixed by John for our departure, not a single boy failed to reach the *rendezvous* at the proper time.

Our outings in this way naturally took hue from our leader's predilections ; and these, happily for us, were tinged freely with poetry. For although, so far as we are able to call his presence and manners to memory, he was but a plain, homely laddie, his heart revelled in rural beauty, his arms in bunches of blossom, his eye in wild-flowers, his palate in 'black bides' and 'slaes.' Needs it be told where our rambles thus were ? Wherever woods were, green and cool; wherever bramble-berries grew in close, inviting clusters ; wherever prattling, laughing streams danced along, glittering in the glad sunshine,—there, with John Cowan as our cicerone and leader, whose *dicta* none ever sought or wished to gainsay, often were we ; and some of our most pleasant memories of our school-boy days are associated with these excursions, which he most frequently originated. It is many years since we last met John ; but the sweet savour of his memory is

¹ Mrs. Hemans.

still present to our mind, just as the fragrance of some fair flower we have felt at times seems to affect our sense of smell, though the flower itself may long have lain—

‘Scentless and dead.’

In direct antithesis to this was the character exemplified by Andrew —. This boy, our schoolfellow too, would attempt in every way but the right one to sway our councils, although his attempts were nearly always futile, or carried only a negative influence. Aware of the fact that he was possessed of no moral suasion, he sought to meet his deficiency in this respect by coercion. The slave of a fierce temper, which kindled into fury on the slightest provocation or opposition to his wishes, and, when in such fiery moods, utterly regardless of the injury he inflicted upon his playfellows,—kicking and plunging at all hands,—it must be owned that Andrew was considerably more dreaded than respected, and his fractious, bullying disposition had full play for a long time, until, in an evil moment, his weak point was discovered under circumstances which, on the face of them, did not seem calculated to bring about such a result.

Some trifling cause had given Andrew occasion for his usual ebullition of wrath, and he was about to annihilate the offender, a little Irish boy who sometimes kept company with us, when the culprit, in the extravagant manner of his country, popped down on his knees and in Hibernian patois began to beseech his irate foe for pity. All in vain,—Andrew was a stranger to that sentiment,—and matters looked serious indeed for the suppliant, until in his agony he clutched Andrew's left hand in both his own and held on firmly. Andrew's right wrist had a malformation about it, but

it had never been known until then that this malformation rendered his hand and arm almost useless ; if we mistake not, it was one of his many boasts that his right arm, although thus marred, was the stronger of the two. As his ill star would have it, he did not kick out on this occasion, but fruitlessly essayed once or twice to strike with his right hand. The failure was at once detected by the group of boys who stood looking on, and if not in so many words, at least to the effect of the opening sentences of Phillips' oration on the fall of Napoleon Bonaparte, the cry went round, 'He is fallen ! We may now pause before that splendid prodigy, which towered amongst us like some ancient ruin, whose frown terrified the glance its magnificence attracted.'

The change in Andrew's behaviour from that time hence was very marked. If not made sweet, his former sourness was much modified ; and in disputes in which he chanced to be a party, instead of, as before, flinging his sword into the scale to decide issues, if justice lay at all on the other side, Andrew's humble cognovit was spontaneously offered.

Prior to Andrew's humiliation, his destructive attentions were most frequently bestowed on Daniel Lowe, whose death, when a pupil of St. Rollox School, was the first which occurred during Mr. Donald's incumbency in the old school. From the shape of his head-gear, which closely resembled that of the strolling German bandsmen seen in our streets, but with the addition of a tassel suspended by a cord from the crown of the cap,—a combination which appears to adapt it exclusively for the pates of monkeys kept to dance upon barrel organs,—Daniel bore the nickname,

under which he literally rejoiced, of Rangy-tang (*orang-outang*). This sobriquet carried no offence, but rather was readily answered to by him; and he appeared to take especial delight, when out of school, and sometimes in it, as opportunity offered, in personating the antics of his hirsute namesakes.

James Cowan, a brother of John Cowan, possessed none of the influence exercised by the latter, but in common with John had an eye to natural beauty, and enjoyed a ramble through the green fields and woods of spring and summer.

In school, in the warm and balmy days, he was particularly fond of drawing, to the quiet amusement of his schoolfellows, bright, happy, verbal pictures of the delicious sensations we would be sure to experience 'if we would all go and have a good bathe in the afternoon,' James invariably promising to be in the van, and give us the lead by taking the first 'header' or dive. Now it so happened that if there were one thing more than another in this wide world which he most cordially detested, it was cold water, particularly when it formed the element into which it was proposed to immerse him *in puris naturalibus*,—a fact thoroughly well known to all his schoolfellows, having been by ocular demonstration proved to them times and ways without number. Nevertheless, for the humour of the thing, he was generally allowed 'full swing' in painting his imaginary delightful, limpid pictures, and as often it was agreed among us to follow his advice by all having 'a good bathe in the afternoon.' Sometimes this form of recreation was indulged in on Saturdays too, on which days we had the usual school holiday, and when, as in the case of our afternoon swimming'

fêtes, James was as good as his word in taking the lead to our favourite resort. This *acidalus* was a little west of Blochairn Ironworks and on the opposite side of the canal, where a soft green park, screened from the canal embankment by a thick high hedge, served admirably as a place to dress and undress. It was at the latter point, viz. the undressing, that James' courage began to fail; but a little coaxing combined with a little jeering usually succeeded in getting him to strip, and then to the brink of the water. The old saw as to leading a horse to the water but failing to make him drink, applied in a way to James and his bathing, for language in no form could induce him to commit his precious body to the treacherous element. Clenching his teeth, and with a wild, desperate look of determination in his eyes, he would tremblingly dip his big toe in the water, and then with a shudder exclaim, 'Oh! but it's cauld, cauld!' On repeating this farce three or four times, he would add in a shame-faced way, 'I don't think I'll mind gaun in th' day, I'll see the morn!' and then run into the park and re-dress. In spite of all this, the next bright day brought with it in full force James' fond imaginings of the bliss to be realized by 'a good bathe in the afternoon.'

This reference to bathing in the Monkland Canal recalls to recollection another schoolfellow, who took to the water as naturally as a duck: we allude to Samuel Cameron, a brother of the Murdoch Cameron to whom we have already referred. Samuel was, however, possessed of aquatic qualifications which rendered bathing a luxury to him—a luxury which he often availed himself of. He was a fearless and graceful diver; and, illustrative of his swimming powers, it may

be mentioned that it was not at all unusual for, or difficult to, him to swim at a ‘spell’ from Blochairn Ironworks to the Monkland Coal Basin fronting Castle Street,—a distance of about a mile and a half,—which he accomplished at an ordinary walking pace.

The same strength and power of endurance also gave him great advantage over us in such games as football and ‘rounders’: the latter is a game, we fear, now well-nigh obsolete, if not wholly so; it closely resembled the more modern and well-known game of cricket. It is needless to say that Sam was thus a coveted possession when we engaged in rounders; and it was noticeable how, when he assumed the bat, those who were ‘out’ would disperse themselves three or four times the distance away from the wicket adopted when his less powerful playmates were batsmen.

Our usual playground for this exhilarating pastime was on a large grass-covered common—known then as Tennants’ Park—bounded by Glebe Street on the east, Port Dundas Canal on the north, Parliamentary Road on the south, and Dobbie’s Loan on the west,—a site now covered by manufactories and workmen’s dwelling-houses.

However violent the transition, it is none the less true that Samuel shone also as *the beau* of the school—we italicize *the*, as we think he was the only boy in the school who played this *rôle*. It would be somewhat invidious to specify here those whom Sam chose to make his belles, for they were always the well-favoured girls of the school, and their name was legion; in fact, Sam in this respect resembled Watts’ exemplary busy bee, needing no coaxing to—

‘ Improve each shining hour,
And gather honey all the day
From every opening flower.’

In his indulgent moods we ourselves were at times taken under his wing and initiated into some of the mysteries of billing and cooing, when for the nonce—

‘Enoch was host one day, Philip the next,
While Annie still was mistress ; but at times
Enoch would hold possession for a week :
“ This is my house and this my little wife.”
“ Mine too,” said Philip, “ turn and turn about ; ”
When if they quarrell’d, Enoch, stronger made,
Was master ;’¹—

but our quarrels over the Annies were of rare occurrence, as we had too lively a sense of Sam’s goodness in allowing us the least share in the profits of this unique partnership, and of our own utter want of capital to stand alone in the business. Sam was an Ajax.

We never were intimately enough acquainted with David Gray to have opportunity to form any very accurate opinion of his peculiarities or abilities as a schoolboy. Our recollection of him is to the effect that as a lad he was pretty much self-contained, firm, and self-reliant in his manner : in a word—and that a Doric one—stuffy. But whatever might have been his qualifications in the days of his attendance at our school, we should never have suspected he would become a full-blown musician.

At a soiree in the new school several years since, we heard David sing twice or thrice, one of his songs being ‘Will o’ the Wisp.’ His appearance was, from the first, considered somewhat adventuresome—an idea which his performance did not wholly efface. In the part of the song we have specified, where—

¹ Tennyson.

'I laugh, ah ha !
I laugh, ah ha !
I laugh at their folly and pain !—'

there was so much incongruity between poor David—evidently heavily overweighted by his part, deeply distressed thereby and sweating at every pore—and the jolly words and tune of his song, that the audience were unable to resist the effect, and, holding their sides, involuntarily laughed a hearty chorus to the same air as he was singing.

What wonders are effected by time ! David, we are informed on good authority, is now a teacher, and a highly esteemed one too, of music, vocal and instrumental, and organist in the leading church of a large town not a hundred miles from the banks of the Tay. *Quantum mutatus ab illo !*

On the same occasion as that on which David's *début* in public as a singer was made, *i.e.* the soiree just mentioned, a young friend, a pupil-teacher in another school in the city, gave a comic sketch of an itinerant menagerie, the fun of the piece consisting mainly in the circumstance of some one or other of the gentlemen on the platform being singled out as the animal described. Inviting his audience to follow him—in imagination—‘to the next caravan,’ he pointed to Mr. Thomas Brunton, principal assistant in the school at that period, who was seated on the platform, saying, ‘This, ladies and gentlemen, is the blue-faced monkey.’

Despite the Darwinian theory, we must state that Mr. Brunton had as little as most people of likeness to our reputed common progenitor, but it so happened that—rather short in stature, having jet black hair and

darkish complexion, without beard or whiskers, but with a markedly bluish hue where these might have been—he did, in his elevated position, realize to some extent the appearance of the imaginary monkey we were called to contemplate, and general laughter was occasioned by the fortuitous hit; the hilarity was intensified by the immobile expression and attitude he assumed when aware of having become the observed of all observers. We understand that in the committee room his frigidity was dropped, and that he warmly demanded an *amende honorable*—which was readily accorded—for the supposed intentional insult.

Mr. Brunton was then a poet of no mean order, evinced by the fact that a little later, for his poem, ‘Lines on the Death of Lord Elgin,’ he was accorded the prize offered by his *Alma Mater*, Glasgow University, for the best effusion on this subject. He was a very fair vocal musician, and excelled also as an elocutionist. Not a few of our readers have doubtless, in common with ourselves, a vivid recollection of the impressively solemn manner in which he was wont to recite Longfellow’s ‘Old Clock on the Stair,’ with its refrain—

‘For ever—never! Never—for ever!’

Alexander Linn, or, as we should rather say, Mr. Alexander Linn, as we never knew him as plain Alexander, was for two or three years principal assistant in the new school, where he was a favourite with all, and that deservedly.

Mr. Linn had a good deal to commend him to one’s favour. Besides being very courteous, and yet bright and jovial in his bearing, he was well-favoured, and

sported as unexceptionable whiskers as the most ardent youth could desire.

During his term at St. Rollox, and we fear before and after, the author laboured under that common but none the less on that account to be regretted malady, *cacoëthes scribendi*, a rage for scribbling. In its progress this disease brought us into collision with Mr. Linn, the subject of our war of words being, ‘Is teaching in a public school a suitable vocation for ladies?’ We exchanged a good few essays, which were read at mid-day to a select few, who sat as judges in the case. The result which, on account of the difference in our respective ages, was expected by our judges to ensue, did ensue, to wit, that the author was (metaphorically) thoroughly well thrashed. We are not prepared to state that this chastisement served to cure us of the disease mentioned, but the circumstance finds place here, in order that we may testify to a different effect which this combat produced, viz. that it was only from that time we felt capable of composition, however moderate, and we venture to offer the relation to teachers as a hint for what it may be worth.

But if thus valiant in war, Mr. Linn was gentle in peace, and some of the most pleasantly spent hours we have known were those spent in his company, either in his lodgings or at delightful little tea and supper parties in Mr. Donald’s house. At these latter Mr. Linn’s songs, favourites they were to us all, were most frequently ‘The Drunkard’s Ragged Bairn,’ and ‘Green Grow the Rashes, O !’ When about to sing the former, he invariably premised that his song was not to be understood as a hint to the host to debar ‘a wee drop, for we could *all* stand that;’ and the gusto with which he gave the latter, especially its chorus,—

' Green grow the rashes, O !
 Green grow the rashes, O !
 The blithest days that e'er I kent
 Were spent among the lasses, O !—'

was a thing to be remembered.

Daniel Maclellan was a boy who, from certain physical peculiarities (defects) under which he laboured, would have been a character in any school or district in which he might have been placed.

Daniel, or Dannie, as he was more familiarly known, was very lame on account of a deformation of his hip-joint, which deformation the poor fellow incurred, when a mere boy, in jumping from a hay-loft upon a cart filled with grass. He had reached the spot intended in his spring, but the grass having been loosely packed, slipped with him, bringing him heavily to the ground on his hip. He walked with the assistance of a short thick staff. Additional to this misfortune, Dannie suffered from a stammering impediment in his speech, and in endeavouring to overcome this continually recurring impediment, his eyes kept blink, blinking simultaneously with his eh—eh—ehs.

The characteristics which the reader probably expects to learn as having been concomitant to such unfavourable peculiarities were, indeed, present in full force in Dannie. He was very precocious, old-fashioned in his manners, and delighted in cracking a kindly joke.

The conversation — so strange and puzzling to English ears, immortalized in the pages of Dean Ramsay — related as having occurred between a cautious old dame, about to purchase a new petticoat, and the vendor,—

' 'Oo' ?
Ay, 'oo'.
A' 'oo' ?
Ay, a' 'oo'.
A' ae' 'oo' ?
Ay, a' ae' 'oo' ;'—

was in a way matched by Dannie in one of his standard jokes, the only one we shall offer the reader.

' Eh—eh—éh—I'se warrant noo yer the length eh—eh—eh o' Letin (Latin) ?' was his usual preliminary to the perpetration of this joke. ' Oh yes,' would be the reply; ' why do you ask ?' ' Becau—cau—cause may—may—maybe ye'll tell me the meaning o' this' (written phonetically)—

' Infur tauris,
Inoc nonis,
Inma delis,
Incli nonis ?'

It is perhaps necessary to explain here what some of our readers may not know, that this imitation of Latin is merely another instance of ' Bill Stumps, his mark,' which so perplexed the Pickwickian antiquaries; when written in plain English, and divested of the trick in pronunciation, it is simply—

' In fir tar is,
In oak none is,
In mud eel is,
In clay none is.'

We cannot remember that Dannie's riddle was ever solved on the spot by any of his victims, and when they were obliged to confess their ignorance, without in any way assisting them out of their mental muddle he would, with a chuckling laugh, hobble away, only looking back to fling the taunt, ' Jis-jis-jist what I-I-I expected ! Gang tae yer mither an' *she'll* tell ye.'

Besides our displays at the annual examinations held in presence of the pupils' parents, school managers, three or four clergymen, etc., we had occasional gleams of sunshine from other and perhaps more welcome sources breaking in upon the gloom bred of the monotony of our every-day school life. These rifts in the clouds were generally due to the visits we paid as a school *en masse* to the panoramas or dioramas located in a tenement in West Nile Street,—now known, we believe, as Hengler's Cirque, but then as the Princess Theatre,—or to the visits to the school of itinerant ventriloquists, exhibitors of Fulton's orrery, magic lantern scenes, or the like.

An amusing incident occurred during the visit of one of this fraternity with a magic lantern, who, with the laudable intention of combining biblical instruction (especially of that reliable kind relating to the facial features of the kings, prophets, and apostles) with such entertaining sights as a man, while sound asleep with his mouth open, swallowing rats wholesale, etc., had a good number of his slides devoted to the former class. In his cut-and-dry lecture he had reached a bald-headed, white-bearded, patriarchal figure, whom he introduced as, 'And this is Samuel, the great—' when Murdoch Cameron, in a snarling, short tone, called out, ' 'Tis not ; oor Sam's at hame wi' sair een !'

On another occasion, during the visit of a ventriloquist to the school, one summer's afternoon, a ludicrous incident occurred.

Having drawn in ink, and unobserved to the children, the likeness of a child's face on the back of his hand, and wrapped his pocket handkerchief cap or 'mutch' style round the face and about his arm, he walked

through the room fondling his ‘ nice little baby,’ which, by means of his ventriloquial powers, displayed a very squally, ill-natured disposition, so much so that after endeavouring for some little time to soothe its ruffled temper, but all in vain, he was obliged to put it up the chimney—a feat, we need hardly stay to explain, which was accomplished by his handkerchief being dexterously whipped off, and the drawing on his hand concealed by his coat sleeve. The performer’s paternal affection then led him to walk down the centre of the hall (it was the lower one in the new school), always looking up to the ceiling and calling out in fatherly tones, ‘ Who’s there ?’ invariably being answered in tiny, squeaking notes, ‘ It’s me.’ In this way he had brought the imaginary infant overhead to the north or entrance end of the hall, at which stood a desk somewhat of the style of those seen in our Presbyterian churches for the use of ‘ precentors.’ The body of this desk was a press used for storage of slates, etc., its door, in two wings, opening on the side presented to the school. One of the wings happened to be ajar as the gastriloquist approached it, and his practised eye at once saw in this recess a fitting spot from which to bring his ‘ dear little baby’ out to the light once more. With this intention the handkerchief was again slyly brought into requisition ; and when duly adjusted, by which time he had reached the door of the desk, the question was put as usual, ‘ And who’s there ?’ but before he had time to personate the child’s reply, to his astonishment, and, we suspect, to his dismay also, a curly-headed, dirty-faced little urchin, with a pair of great, wondering blue eyes, which at the moment had intense fear added to their expression, looked over from the back of the desk, where he had been surrep-

titiously secreted to hear the performance, and whined out, ‘ It’s me ; my mither widna gie me a penny, and I wantit tae hear ye like the ither scholars ! ’ Amid the hearty laughter of his schoolfellows, he was kindly brought out and accommodated with a seat among them.

On the occasion of the visit of a German *artiste* to our school, whose performance was also given on an afternoon, and in the lower hall of the new school, some hilarity was caused by an involuntary exclamation of doubt by one of the boys.

Herr’s talent was unique. Able to imitate the sounds of a trumpet, cornopean, flute, and the liquid double notes of a Jewish harp,—this last being an achievement in which he claimed to stand alone among mankind,—he was quite a musical host in himself. But it was rather in his capacity as an observant traveller detailing some of his observations that he received the uncomplimentary expression of doubt referred to.

‘ In dis contre ven it rrain,’ explained Herr Sangerman, ‘ de people dey say, “ O ! vat a meeserable day ! ” but in my contre ven it rrain de people dey say, “ De good Lord He be pleased to send de rrain—de good Lord be blessed ! ” ’

As this glowing ascription of piety to his countrymen was scarcely in accordance with our historical readings, considerable surprise was excited among us by Herr’s announcement ; and one boy, seated in the body of the hall, who clearly shared the general opinion that Herr laboured under a falsehood, in a canty, dry, sarcastic tone, but evidently in a fit of abstraction, exclaimed, ‘ Win’erfu’ na’ ! ’ A burst of merry laughter

broke over the school at this unexpected sally, at which Herr Sangerman first looked perplexed and then angry, only resuming the thread of his discourse after flashing sundry vengeful looks in the direction where the offending youth sat, and muttering in a contemptuous, mocking voice, ‘ Weenervana ! ’

The district of St. Rollox was possessed of a large number of ‘ characters ;’ indeed, we have often thought it was particularly favoured in this respect, and were this a history of St. Rollox we should be able to swell our pages with our reminiscences of these. The comparison of Marseilles—with its genial climate and multitudinous representatives of almost every civilised country in the world—to a miniature world itself, is familiar to all. In the same manner St. Rollox, with its heterogeneous population of English, Scotch, and Irish, might be likened to a miniature United Kingdom, and it will thus readily be supposed that such a mixed people could scarcely fail to be rich in peculiar and eccentric characters. But we have here only to do with St. Rollox School, and so we confine our notices to those characters who were identified more or less with the *tout ensemble* of our school history. These in themselves were not a few, and our reminiscences of them are voluminous, but evident considerations must lead us to be sparing of our space under this head.

We will put our right foot foremost, beginning with royalty—none other than the King of the Ribbon Men himself.

This august personage was not in the least un-get-at-able nor a recluse, and whene’er he took his walks abroad was without the escort of a guard—if we except

his hobnailed boots and horny fists. To be plain, his majesty, however autocratic and pretentious he might be in his kingdom,—wherever that was,—in St. Rollox was only an Irish labourer of very uncouth and repulsive exterior, and generally appeared as if under an attack of *delirium tremens*. He was wont to pull himself up sharply on the Canal bridge in Castle Street, strike an attitude, and after attracting a crowd of passers-by, by glaring fiercely at them with bloodshot eyes, smite his breast, exclaiming, ‘Oim Kaing of the Ribbon Men !’ This assertion of his kingship was generally spoken in a tone and with a gesture which both implied defiance to any or all who might dare to impugn his claim ; and if silence give consent, his majesty’s rights were usually tacitly acknowledged. We say *usually*, for another claimant to the title, with its corresponding privileges, appeared in the person of Samuel Cameron. If within earshot of the madman when he raved thus on the bridge, Samuel, who when a boy spoke with a slight burr, would immediately go right up to him, and in mocking tones call out, ‘Oim Kaing of the Ribbon Men !’ ‘Yerr naethin’ o’ the kin’ ! Man, dae ye no ken yerr faitherr whan ye see him ?’ Many a hot chase our adventurous schoolmate had on account of these same daring manifestations of humour.

Old Jenkins, whose name is still preserved—despite the ravages of time and the City Improvement Scheme by -in the designation of the entrance to what was once body property, but which now belongs to a descendant of that ‘Jenkins’ Close’—was an eccentric person, who ~~sarcastier~~ perhaps be remembered by some of our readers exclaineended the school about thirty years since, i.e.

in 1840,—before or after,—and sought their lunch in his premises.

Jenkins delighted in recapitulating the eccentricities of other people, while wilfully ignoring his own ; and in the manifestation of this peculiarity, often gave currency to stories and expressions some of which were—apocryphal at any rate. He enhanced his recitals by a laugh which was *only heard, not seen* ; for he so laughed that not a nerve of his face nor movement in lip or eye evinced laughter. A deaf person would have been disposed to classify Jenkins as the antithesis of *l'homme qui rit*, seeing that a guttural, burling sound was the only indication of his mirth.

Jenkins never tired of repeating this story : ‘Last Sunday afternoon’ (the lapse of time apparently called for no alteration by him of that date, for it always remained ‘last Sunday afternoon’) ‘my minister said, “There’s a gude wheen folk unco reg’lar at the kirk in the forenoon, wha seem tae forget the road back again in the efternoon. My freends, mark my words ! there’ll be nae forenoon nor afternoon in heaven—and hoo will oor half-day freens faur then ? I’ faith, they’ll fin’ tae their cost there’s nae half heevens, an’ that they’ve lost the hale ain !” ’

It was the practice of the Rev. Mr. Menzies about that period, in connection with his house-to-house visitation, at times to gather a number of families into the house of some one of them to hold divine service there. . None were more ready or willing to place their homes at his disposal for such meetings than Jenkins, and none were more conspicuous by invariable absence than Jenkins himself. In backing out of Mr. Menzies’ invitations to him to be present, he displayed all the

canniness of his country. ‘A weel, it’s the least I could dae—nae doubt I ocht to be there,’ was his usual reply; but he took care not to commit himself further, and never *was* there.

Once when the same friend remarked to him, ‘Mr. Jenkins, you are a very old man, and should—’ the latter stopped his admonitor by saying, after a laugh of the kind described, ‘Ay, nae doubt, nae doubt, I’m an auld man, *but I’m quite willing to leave (live).*’

Willie Telfer, a lame man who kept the gate—seen in the diagram of the old school—which was one of the entrances from Castle Street to the works of Messrs. Tennant, was an oddity. He was very variable in temper; at times he would in a fatherly manner, almost affectionate, invite us during winter to warm ourselves before the huge, glowing furnace, which then stood a few yards from the gate; at other times he was so surly and sour in his manner that we dared scarcely approach the gate at all. Against this changeableness of temper, none of us were in a position to protest, for Willie’s furnace favours were held in high repute, and their bestowal was all of grace. But we could not fail to discuss the unpleasant changes among ourselves, and the omens and auguries of his fitful, capricious tempers were frequently objects of solicitous study by many a timorous, blue-eyed child. It was related to us by a friend,—a clergyman,—who, shortly after receiving a charge in the Townhead, began a series of evening lectures on Job, that Willie was among the most regular attendants at these public addresses, a point as to which he (Willie) seemed rather proud; for whenever our friend showed face in

the vicinity of Willie's gate, the poor body would hobble after him at top speed, and on reaching him would exclaim, 'Eh, sir, but yon was a gran' lecture ye gied last nicht! Sae powerfu' an' sae stirring! I can ne'er forget it—especially at *yon* pairt. You said, an' you said—you said—' and here Willie, gesticulating violently, would give a representation—of the most ludicrous, garbled description—of the previous evening's lecture, generally concluding with, 'Eh, man, but it was gran'!' in a despairing tone, as if it were *too* grand to say any more about.

Angel Gabriel was a Jewish-looking, elderly man, bald-headed, and having a long flowing beard blanched by his fifty or sixty winters to a snowy whiteness. He appeared to scrape a precarious livelihood from the sale of pamphlets—alleged by him to be the production of his own pen—which he sold often in large numbers to the excited auditors who crowded round him in hundreds, immediately at the close of his alarming addresses, for he was also an itinerant lecturer.

These lectures or addresses were always on one and the same subject, to wit, the immediate advent of the day of judgment. Being well up in the prophetical books of the Bible, he was extremely voluble and ready in his references to these, and, somewhat after the manner of the more celebrated Dr. Cumming of London, was in the habit of deciphering the signs of the times by drawing a comparison between the omens specified by the sacred writers and the events of the current day; a comparison which, when made by this Jewish lecturer, could not, in the usual acceptation of the term, be called odious, for the points of similarity were surprisingly numerous, the differences few and

inappreciable. In this manner he argued, and we fear with conclusive cogency to not a few of his congregation, that the events foretold in the Bible narrative to follow close upon the signs and wonders therein mentioned were nigh at hand, in fact might be expected momentarily. It is not to be wondered at that thus a good portion of those who, having heard, believed him, became anxious about their tenure of life and happiness. We know that such cases were plentiful; indeed, people of average enlightenment and equanimity, who have not moved among classes such as the illiterate black squads of large towns constitute, and of which St. Rollox and other districts of Glasgow are able to offer their full contingents, would scarcely credit the influence of demagogues like this person, be their 'mission' or hobby what it may.

From his frequent references to angels, particularly the angel Gabriel, the harum-scarum youths of our school had irreverently dubbed him with the same appellation—Angel Gabriel, or Gabriel as he was more commonly designated; and having survived the anguish bred of his predictions as to the last day, they had grown sceptical of his prophetic warnings, and bore themselves to him accordingly.

When observed mounting his rostrum,—a kitchen chair,—usually erected in Monkland Street, corner of Castle Street, rallying round him before the commencement of his thunder and lightning oration, with much amenity they were in the custom of 'tackling' him in this fashion: 'Lo'd sake, Gabriel! are ye here again? We a' thocht ye'd hae been in *yon place* lang syne! An' ye see *we're* a' tae the fore tae! Ah! ye wur jist jokin' whin ye tell't us yon nonsense the last time? Ye're an awfu' le'er!'

Sow Bags, *alias* Silver Guts,¹ was a pauper messenger in Barnhill Poorhouse. Both *sobriquets* were riddles to us in our boyhood and are mysteries to us now, so that we are bound to own our inability to enlighten the reader as to the origin of either. So far as casual observation went, there was nothing about this worthy's abdominal region so very capacious or prefulgent as to entitle him to be distinguished in this way, as he was by all. If he possessed any more aliases,—including a baptismal one,—these were wholly unknown to the residents in the east end of Glasgow—his reputation was not confined to St. Rollox.

Our friend was short in stature, had a full-sized head, which he always carried slightly thrown back, with his mouth wide open displaying a large tongue resting in it—had a broad, squat body, and in walking rolled, to use a common expression, like a ship in distress.

He was seldom off the tramp, either going or coming, between Barnhill and Glasgow, and thus afforded the mischievously inclined a ready butt for their wanton sport. We regret to say that he received a good deal of such unwelcome attention from the boys of St. Rollox School, although it is but right to add that beyond saluting him with his nicknames, we think no molestation in any other form was offered him by them. We would have wished to be able to say the same with respect to the younger members of the working classes in St. Rollox, whom we have seen in large

¹ Although familiarity in early youth with these epithets considerably blunted our sense of their gross vulgarity, we think it due to our readers to explain that we employ them only because we are in utter ignorance of the man's proper name. To have omitted a reference to him in these pages would have been to give him undue conspicuity by his absence.

bodies hooting and yelling these offensive epithets after him, and hurling caps and other missiles, not so soft, at his devoted head. S. B. or S. G. was exceedingly irascible, and when accosted by either of his painfully familiar names would grow pale with rage, and stutter and stammer out the most dire imprecations and oaths. We have seen him also at times tear, stick in hand, into a large crowd, and wield his weapon in a manner boding no good to the symmetry and ease of his victims' crania.

Keek-um-funny, *alias* Look-um-straight, was another character, pertaining in some respects to the same class as S. B. Our attentions to the first differed from our attentions to the second, inasmuch as the latter received them only in common with those of every thoughtless person in the neighbourhood, whereas Keek-um was allowed, so far as we were aware, to go unmolested by any but the boys of St. Rollox School.

Had he been content to meet our scurrility as it deserved, namely, by silent contempt and a little avoidance of the places where we were wont most to congregate, the probability is that the attempt to fasten these nicknames upon him would have died of inanition, and he have been allowed to walk about in peace. Instead, however, of taking this course, Keek-um was certain to find his way daily to the immediate vicinity of the school, where he would stalk about as if deliberately inviting the insults which were not long in coming in abundance. Having thus, we suppose, found an excuse for making a fool of himself, he would pull his dress hat well down upon his head, button his coat, tuck back his coat wrist-bands, spit in his right hand before clutching in it his thick walking-stick,

and then start on the war trail at double-quick time after a handful of our boys. The odds in such a task were all against him, and his hunts were fruitless, without exception ; but this appeared no reason why the ludicrous pantomime should not be enacted day after day. At times, when brought to a whiter heat of rage than usual, he engaged the services of a hail-fellow-well-met policeman to assist him in the chase ; in such cases the pair adopted a cordon at the Canal bridge, Castle Street, for their tactics, the policeman stationing himself suitably—according to the conventional ideas of the present day—at the door of an eating-house which was directly opposite the gate of Messrs. Tennants' works, and Keek-um stowing himself with great pains in one of the interstices of that gate.

To the ordinary race of mortals the dilemma presented in the attempt to run such a gauntlet would have proved insuperable, but our schoolfellows easily surmounted the difficulty with the assistance of an ex-pupil and accomplice, Andrew Rankine. At that time Andrew was a carter, and his vehicle was of the ordinary close-bodied description. His 'rakes' took him, opportunely for us, often past the old school. Getting into his cart about Tennant Street or Parliamentary Road, a number of us would lie partly concealed by a bag of hay or the like, and in this manner ride past the two vigilant sentries who kept eager watch and ward for their game. Andrew, who enjoyed the fun as much as any of us, has been known to make two or three short journeys with his cart to accommodate us when in such difficulties, and was in equal danger with ourselves of exploding from suppressed laughter at the quiet way in which our short-sighted obesities were 'done.' Away from our

Epeus and his cart, we took care not to halloo before being out of the wood, and it was only when filing into school with our fellows that we relieved the sentries from duty by shouting, ‘Keek-um-funny ! Hurrah !’

To meet a probable query of the reader, we add that Keek-um and his ally eschewed contiguity to the school door, most probably to avoid the not remote danger of Mr. Donald falling foul of them and opening their eyes—painful to them—to a right conception of their silly conduct.

As a corporate body the pupils of St. Rollox School in Castle Street had, in the first years of the author’s attendance there, two grandmothers, one a beneficent genius, the other just the reverse. Number one, our beneficent friend, was known simply as ‘Auld Granny,’ while number two sorrowed under the distinctive appellation ‘Granny Sair E’en.’

The latter dame ought to be classed in the same category as our patrons Keek-um-funny and he of the (presumably) lustrous intestines—S. •B.

Labouring to an alarming extent at once under a vile temper and an ophthalmic affection, this poor old woman’s coming among us was usually the signal for the rapid disappearance, in excessive fear and disgust, of the younger pupils ; while the elder boys, at any rate, saw in it the signal rather for a little horse-play. Like her prototypes described above, she regularly carried a thick oaken staff, apparently not at all to assist her failing physical powers, but simply as a weapon of offence and defence. This useful, if not ornamental or womanlike article was only brought into play for our mutual benefit, after her hortation to

us to 'go home and look at our auld mothers' had failed to disperse us. Then with remarkable agility and accuracy of aim—this latter showing her unimpaired sight despite the inflammation of her eyes—the staff was sent spinning about our heads, occasionally developing bumps there which had previously escaped observation. In order that this sort of fun might not end prematurely, some desperate boy or another would promptly restore the vixen her stick, which frequently was as promptly again flung whizzing among her tormentors.

Auld Granny *par excellence*, or the beneficent, lived only to do good in selling apples, pears, gooseberries, and all the etceteras which naturally suggest themselves in connection with these. But for the circumstance that she was, at the time we refer to, apparently of great age, there was nothing about this old body calling for particular remark.

The relations existing between Granny and her youthful patrons of St. Rollox School were generally of the most amicable, confidential, and familiar description. At times, however, effect was given by our boys to the opinion that things may be too sweet to be wholesome, and the dog-day atmosphere engendered of these relations was cooled and clarified by a passing storm in the form of an upsetting of her two-wheeled barrow with all its contents, in which cases poor Granny, after shedding a few tears of despondency, was fully consoled and compensated by the subscription collected and handed to her there and then by her tormentors. Variety to this sort of fun was found in carrying off, holus-bolus,—as Samson did the gates of Gaza,—her barrow with its treasures, and secreting it in some one or other of the 'pen closes' which were then more

numerous about Castle Street and its surroundings than now. The distress of the old woman, on returning after her brief temporary absence and discovering her earthly all *non est*, was often pitiable in the extreme. When restored to her she would, in her cracked, trembling voice, while a smile—feeble and faint as sunshine through the frosty atmosphere of December—broke through her tears, say to us, ‘Now, boys, what are yez going to buy from auld Granny after frightening the wits out of her ?’

‘Mussels’ was another caterer to the inward man who flourished under the patronage of the pupils of St. Rollox School in Castle Street, although, perhaps, he looked more than auld Granny to the general public as his main customers.

As his name indicates, mussels were the staple commodity of his traffic, although he dealt largely in other shell-fish, and traded also in ‘dulse’ (*Rhodsmenia palmata*). This last was usually in the sere and yellow leaf, and in our veneration for its old age was left undisturbed in its resting-place in Mussels’ barrow by all our schoolfellows. His stance was commonly on the right-hand south end of the canal bridge, going south.

Mussels was an average specimen of his class, but possessed a pair of lungs far superior to the average.

In another department of his business, we mean the oyster branch, he used to perambulate the streets, often until midnight, with his basket on his arm, and call out ‘Caller ’isters’ in exceedingly long drawn and not altogether unmusical accents. We have a lively recollection of lying awake in bed and listening in delight to this cry (although we never could swallow an

‘ister’), oftentimes sounding through the snow-covered, silent streets,—streets apparently deserted by all but himself, an occasional inebriate picking, uncertainly, his way homewards, or some messenger of love hieing urgently from or to the house of death or suffering.

Aillie Betty would probably, when in the flesh (and when alive she was very much in the flesh), have chosen to rank rather with the good folks of the Townhead—which locality, we believe, is bounded on the north by the line between Garngad Hill and Monkland Street, and on the south by the Rottenrow—than with the equally good folks of St. Rollox proper. Nevertheless she had reason to be thankful for the custom brought her by the children of our old school, who flocked to her stall (a kitchen stool of a large growth), placed against the corner of Townmill Road and Castle Street, to secure the wonderful bargains in chipped and pared oranges and apples offered by her. Remembering the handfuls of such fruits a penny secured from her, we think Betty, had she lived to advertise in the parlance of the present day, would have been justified in puffing her ‘alarming sacrifices.’

Betty’s home being in a dreary, tumble-down old tenement, in an *alley* belonging to bleaching and drying greens at the foot of the beautiful Necropolis, skirted by the unlovely, loathsome Mollindinar, her homely Christian name was qualified by Aillie. She was enormously stout, and alike in this respect as in vending cheap fruit, occupied as a ‘character’ in Glasgow very much the same position as Sarah Sibbald did for half a century in Edinburgh.

‘The Gentleman’ was a person of distinguished

appearance—as befitted the honourable title he was known by among our schoolfellows in Castle Street. His visits to our neighbourhood were discreetly seldom, we fancy owing to an excusable objection to having his flowing locks soiled by the concrete atmosphere which has all along obtained there.

'The Gentleman' was an albino. His hair—parted in the centre *à la Dundreary* and flowing over his shoulders—was of snowy whiteness; his eyebrows and lashes were also of this shade. His eyes were of a bright red, and the concentration of his stare at a person was scarcely pleasant. However his appellation may clash with his then occupation, we must, having no other object in view than to tell a plain, unvarnished tale, explain that that occupation was simply begging. With Solomon, our 'Gentleman' understood that there was a time for everything, and, further, that the most suitable times for his begging excursions to St. Rollox were rainy, wretched days (and the days *can* be wretched in St. Rollox, 'with a vengeance,' as Mr. Donald was wont to say), when he might have been seen wandering up and down the streets alongside the pavements, maundering in a slow monotone, and in accents the like of which were, we fancy, never heard on land or sea before. What he said none could tell; but there was no mistaking the man's intention, as, dressed in tawdry, torn black clothes, soaked to his skin, and with the pitiless rain beating on his silvery locks,—for in his visits he was always without any head-gear,—he listlessly trudged along.

The occasion of his being dubbed 'the Gentleman' by our schoolfellows was this: A carter, whose condition—mental and physical—at the time plainly

evinced he had not quite made up his mind to signing the pledge, reeling along spied our friend, and rolling up to him, opened fire thus : 'A'tweel, frien', ye've ta'en an unco bad day tae be oot in the rain athout yer bunnet, like mysel' ; I've lost mine, the L—d only kens whaur ! Whit is't they ca' ye, chiel' ?' This warmth and familiarity on Jehu's part appeared offensive to his fellow in misfortune, who contented himself with giving the carter a wider berth, and moving on, maundering as usual. The latter, however, oblivious to the scant courtesy extended him in reciprocation to his hearty greeting, continued : 'Hud ye ever a faither ? I—I—mean, whit did they ca' him ? Did he gang aboot the streets like yersel' ?' The culminating point of the interrogator's impudence was apparently reached in this last reference, for drawing himself up to simulate dignity, his victim, with an angry flush on his cheek, answered severely,—'Is it *my* father ? My father he was—he was a gentleman—he was—he was a steward in a boat' (pronounced *bout*). Despite the carter's parting shot—'I dou't ye'r lie'n, frien'—as he rolled away, the assertion of the father's gentility lived, and by right of it the son was thenceforth known among us as 'the Gentleman.'

Thiefy Tam, but for his tarry-fingered proclivities, would have been almost an innocent, in the specific signification now given to that term. He must have stood somewhere about six feet six high, and, although rather raw, was correspondingly huge otherwise.

This favourite of Mercury was lazy to a proverb, and was only nominally a boatman by trade or profession. In the very occasional prosecution of this calling he sometimes passed up Castle Street, leading his horse

to the Canal, and at such times if any of our school-fellows chanced to see him, they never lost the opportunity of airing what of wit may be supposed to lie in the following :—‘ I say, Tam, whit kin’ o’ wather is’t wi’ ye up there ? ’ looking at his head ; and, referring to his thievish habits, ‘ Hoo’s the horse blankets selling wi’ ye the noo ? ’ To both these inquiries Tam had always a cheery, civil reply, giving, as his *quid pro quo*, the price of the horse blankets at so much per gill.

Although probably totally ignorant of the adage, ‘ The better day the better deed,’ Tam knew the principle of it ; for the fact was notorious in the Town-head that his lucky hauls were oftenest made early on the Sunday mornings, when he might be said to have retired to *prey*.

In conclusion, we cannot but think that were we to close these pages without pointing the moral which we opine they carry, we should forego what we consider at once a good old-fashioned custom and a fitting opportunity of direct address to all who may peruse them. In the reflection that this opportunity is not only a fitting, but also, in all probability, a *last* opportunity, we feel solemnized and impressed with the privilege. It is our hope that we have carried the reader with us, a not uninterested listener to these our tales of twenty years ago ; and having reached the end of our narratives, whatever our readers’ feelings may be at the prospect of parting with us, in closing this book ours are certainly dashed with sadness in taking leave of them. Of the fact that here we have no abiding place, we are continually being painfully reminded in many ways. To the thoughtful and meditative, one

of such reminders often presents itself in the reflection of doing things for the last time. We daily find ourselves, wittingly and deliberately, doing some things for the last time. For the last time we speak to those who are nigh done with time and its affairs; to those who apparently are only commencing in earnest with these, but as flowerets and buds are gathered by 'the reaper death'; to those who seek their homes in distant lands. And how often, unknown and unsuspected by us, do we things for the last time! The consideration is saddening and sobering. So is it to us now, when about to say good-bye until

'The sweet by and by,'

to all our readers, many of them doubtless our old schoolfellows. We cannot, nor would we wish to shut our eyes to the fact that in these pages we have probably had a final opportunity, a most agreeable one, of meeting with these our former friends, and regret the separation it points to. Little good, however, is done by mingling tears; and in taking leave of our readers at 'the parting of the way,' we would rather seek to speak a word of cheer and courage, to give a fitting watchword for use in the remainder of life's journey. Shall we be permitted to make our moral do for both? *Aide-toi, le ciel t'aidera*—help thyself and Heaven will help thee—is, we conceive, the moral deducible from the history of our school. Although the remark be seemingly anomalous, there are examples which are no examples; examples which, in their height and grandeur, are almost baneful because paralyzing. A St. Paul's or a St. Peter's cathedral does not nerve the average architect to efforts of emulation or more lofty aspirations,—the magnificence of either is simply

oppressive to him. The poor painter gathers neither cheer nor courage from his despairing survey of the *chef d'œuvres* of the ‘grand old masters;’ nor is the plodding, humble sculptor invigorated by contemplation of a Michael Angelo, or the flawless Venus of a Gibson. But the architect, the painter, and the sculptor take heart from examples where the attempt to emulate is within the bounds of reason and not folly, and in this latter respect the history of St. Rollox School is well suited to offer the moral we would draw from it and press upon the consideration of our readers. There is nothing in the lesson thus taught beyond the capabilities of all to understand, of most to practise. We need not recapitulate details to show this; the Alpha and Omega of these, as shown, demonstrate sufficiently how much is possible through steady, intelligent effort. The illustration is, we own, not overpowering, nor would we unduly press it; but having this qualification in view, and remembering the many militating circumstances in the history of our school, we would *à fortiori* press the principle, which holds good in every sphere of life.

There is an Italian proverb—a grim one—which says, ‘Winding sheets have no pockets.’ Apart from the veiled truth thus conveyed, we should indeed regret if these our valedictory remarks were construed into anything like a spur to a vigorous scramble for, or a dogged pursuit of, mere material wealth. As an all in all, as a grand end, such wealth can only prove the cool water, the delicious fruit, evasively receding from the parched lips, eluding the feverish grasp of a Tantalus; but as a means to a legitimate, just, and generous end, even mere material wealth is a veritable boon of God. And depend upon it, one’s influence for good in this world is not enhanced by empty pockets, nor

lessened by well-lined c_ognished in life. It is by such our statement, we would have them detected and marked, of life esteemed incidents when haply some grey-headed career, rather than a man is sketching in prose or verse profane parlance of the "Notabilities," where these It is thus we would comm_ening hand, shall have become for elevation in the moral loo veterans, our histories, honest, steady labour, going v, may be summed up by lessly upright, straightforward, at least to the effect of warrant of our deep interes_sonately by their author to our former brethren in arms laws of St. Rollox :— them the responsibility to viating course.

rn elate
aven's eastern gate,—
give it due expression in our hill and dale,
alone will bring, in all probability, tis-swell ;
fruits of success, and *certainly* the real, because dignity appertaining to true men and women. For, as writes one,¹—himself a hard-working Scotchman,— in words which deserve to be traced in letters of gold over every door in the land, and indelibly impressed upon every living heart :

' There is a perennial nobleness, and even sacredness, in work. Were a man ever so benighted, or forgetful of his high calling, there is always hope in him who actually and earnestly works; in idleness alone is there perpetual despair. Consider how, even in the meanest sorts of labour, the whole soul of a man is composed into real harmony. He bends himself with free valour against his task; and doubt, desire, sorrow, remorse, indignation, despair itself, shrink murmuring far off into their caves. The glow of labour in him is a purifying fire, wherein all poison is burned up; and of

¹ Carlyle.

oppressive to him. The poor de a bright and blessed cheer nor courage from his de *chef d'œuvres* of the 'grand olay of cultivating us. A plodding, humble sculptor involving, grows round, ranges of a Michael Angelo, or the fl:longer a chaos, but a com- But the architect, the paintd become of the earth did heart from examples where ong as it revolves, all irregu- within the bounds of reasoves, all irregularities inces- latter respect the history of an idle, unrevolving man, suited to offer the moral w more than a mere enamelled press upon the consideratior spend on him what colouring nothing in the lesson thvink of this.'

bilities of all to understand, higher sense, in the words need not recapitulate detail: 'Finally, brethren, whatso- and Omega of these, as, whatsoever things are honest, how much is possib^s are just, whatsoever things are pure, The illustrati^{on} things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things. Those things, which ye have both learned, and received, and heard, and seen in me, do: and the God of peace shall be with you.'¹

If we could only persuade our readers, as we wish and seek to do, *to act* upon the principle conveyed in these thrilling words, then we would see with pleasure the realization of our *beau ideal* of what our former schoolfellows ought to be,— independent, active, useful, intelligent, high-souled, open-hearted, and open-handed *Christian* members of society. To conclude with the words which at the Re-union Festival we ventured then to express: 'It is by an *esprit de corps* such as this we would wish the pupils of St. Rollox School—without reference to whether of the old or

¹ Phil. iv. 8, 9.

new school—to be distinguished in life. It is by such a shibboleth we would have them detected and marked, so that years hence, when haply some grey-headed reviewer at their Re-union is sketching in prose or verse “The Old School and its Notabilities,” where these latter, under Time’s winnowing hand, shall have become as few in number as Waterloo veterans, our histories, individually and collectively, may be summed up by him, if not in so many words, at least to the effect of these lines, ascribed affectionately by their author to his old friends and schoolfellows of St. Rollox :—

‘The purpling blush of morn elate
Now breaketh through heaven’s eastern gate,—
By sparkling stream, o’er hill and dale,
In spangled mead and flow’ry vale,

Blithe birds their songs and mazes swell ;
Meet emblems these of one all fair—
Love’s sweet solicitude and care :—
As dawneth now his youth in pride,
Oh ! say what will its hours betide ?
The perils of his pathway tell ?

“*All is well!*”

‘Tis noonday clear, the sun burns high
O’erhead in glory in the sky,
Yet men rest not in their fleet race
For pow’r’s green bays, for wealth and place—

To live a life that men will tell ;
How fares he in his manhood now ?
Lights intellect his eye and brow ?
How bears he in life’s race and moil ?
Bends he in manly, steady toil,
Of noble names the list to swell ?

“*All is well!*”

‘Tis evening now,—a holy calm
Falls as a soothing, healing balm
Around the world’s ached head and breast,
And all is hush’d in peaceful rest—
Calls, silv’ry voiced, the curfew bell :

Time's winters keen have touched with hoar
 His flaxen, waving locks of yore ;—
 What graces bloom in beauty's prime
 As deep'neth thus his ev'ning time ?
 Waits he in peace the tyrant fell ?
 “*All is well!*”

‘Tis noon of night, and silence dread
 Bespeaks the presence of the dead,—
 Drawn are his limbs, glazed is his eye,
 In death's deep sleep his ashes lie,
 Nor joys nor woes his heart now swell :
 No word or sign to me he gave
 As passed he downward to the grave—
 Oh ! say how bore he 'neath death's pow'r ?
 Knew he Heav'n's watchword ? in that hour
 Gleamed hope's bright star ?—in pity tell—
 “*All is well!*”

“*All is well!*”—words of comfort true,
 Awak'ning ever pleasure new,
 Oft as they fall on eager ears,
 Shine in joy's eye, or through grief's tears
 To heav'n ascend when angels tell :—
 So let us strive such lives to live,
 That these may still the glad news give ;
 That friend to friend may thus reply
 When joy is full and hope is high,
 Or when our names death's long roll swell--
 “*All is well!*”

ADIEU.

**NOTICE OF THE RE-UNION FESTIVAL
OF THE FORMER PUPILS OF
ST. ROLLOX SCHOOL,
HELD IN THE
ASSEMBLY ROOMS, BATH STREET, GLASGOW,
ON THE EVENING OF TUESDAY, 16TH FEBRUARY 1875.**

WM. GALBRAITH, Esq., ST. ROLLOX, IN THE CHAIR.

' He dreamed of his home, of his dear native bowers,
And pleasures that waited on life's merry morn ;
While memory stood sideways, half covered with flowers,
And restored every rose, but concealed every thorn.'

—DIMOND'S *Mariner's Dream*.

PROGRAMME.

PART FIRST.

BLESSING, **TEA.**

THANKSGIVING.—TUNE, *Old Hundred.*

All people that on earth do dwell, Sing to the Lord with cheerful voice. Him serve with mirth, His praise forth tell, Come ye before Him and rejoice.	Know that the Lord is God indeed; Without our aid He did us make; We are His flock, He doth us feed, And for His sheep He doth us take.
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CHAIRMAN'S ADDRESS.

Overture—Pianoforte, **MR. S. R. DUNBAR.**

SONG, ‘Killarney,’ . . .	MRS. R. FRASER.
SONG, ‘Where has Scotland found her Fame ?’ . . .	MR. D. CAMERON.
BUFFO SKETCH, ‘Peter Perfect,’ . . .	MR. R. FRASER.
ADDRESS,	DR. M. CAMERON.
SONG, ‘The Guard Ship,’ . . .	MR. R. G. GRAY.
POETICAL SKETCH, { ‘The Old School and its Notabilities,’ }	MR. HUGH DOW.
DUET, ‘When a little Farm we keep,’ . . .	MR. AND MRS. FRASER.

INTERVAL—FRUIT.

PART SECOND.

ADDRESS, **REV. DAVID MENZIES.**

SONG, ‘Won’t you tell me why, Robin ?’ . . .	MRS. R. FRASER.
COMIC MEDLEY, ‘The Nightingale Club,’ . . .	MR. W. GOURLAY.
ADDRESS AND PRESENTATION.	
SONG, ‘Old Friend John,’ . . .	MR. R. G. GRAY.
DESCRIPTIVE { ‘The Seven Ages,’ introducing an amusing sketch of a Teacher and Pupil.	MR. R. FRASER.

INTERVAL—FRUIT.

PART THIRD.

ADDRESS, **MR. HUGH DOW.**

SONG, ‘Hurrah for the Highlands !’ . . .	MR. D. CAMERON.
CHARACTER SKETCH, ‘Sarah Day,’ . . .	MR. R. FRASER.
SONG, ‘Dinna gang tae Sea,’ . . .	MRS. R. FRASER.
SONG, ‘Tom Bowling,’ . . .	MR. R. G. GRAY.
CHARACTER SKETCH, { ‘Billy Barlow,’ with verses written on the occasion,	MR. R. FRASER.

CONCLUDING REMARKS.

Finale, ‘Auld Langsyne,’ **Led by the Artistes.**

An Assembly took place immediately afterwards.



RE-UNION FESTIVAL.

A COMPANY of ladies and gentlemen, numbering about 500, most of whom had formerly been pupils at St. Rollox School, were present at this Re-union. On the platform there were, among others, the Rev. David Menzies of Free Martyrs Church, Dr. M. Cameron, Messrs. W. A. Gray, Dryburgh, Anderson, James Fenwick, John Donald, Thomas Duncanson, and Peter Galbraith. An apology for the Rev. W. B. Turnbull's absence was read by Mr. Menzies.

In the course of a brief address the Chairman said : ' We are indebted for this Re-union to the circumstance that recently St. Rollox School has been acquired by the School Board of Glasgow. By many of the former pupils this change of management was considered a reason why they should meet and talk about the school-boy spot " we ne'er forget, though there we are forgot," and also that it should be made the occasion of presenting Mr. Donald with some tangible mark of the esteem in which he is held by his present and former pupils.

' In these objects I most heartily concur. Mr. Donald has been head-master of St. Rollox School for nearly

a quarter of a century,—first, in the modest rooms in Castle Street, and for the last eighteen years in the present building, which is capable of accommodating some 500 children,—and has borne himself throughout conscientiously and well.

'What with the increasing population of the district and the popularity of the master, there has not been room, for some years, for all the children applying for admission; so that shortly after the passing of the Education Act, the School Board found it necessary to make arrangements for increasing the school accommodation in that as well as in other parts of the city.

'In the belief that the educational wants of the community would be better cared for by the Board than by schools separately managed, the late owner disposed of his property, so that St. Rollox School is now, as I stated at the outset, under the charge of the School Board of Glasgow. This change has been made the occasion of this Re-union, at which I am glad to be present.'

Dr. Murdoch Cameron, Glasgow (a former pupil of the school), in a humorous and telling address, adverted to the difficulties experienced by teachers of public schools in districts such as St. Rollox, and showed how successfully Mr. Donald had combated such difficulties. After gracefully alluding to the kindness displayed by the former proprietors of the school, he concluded with a discriminating reference to the distinctive features of Mr. Donald's system of teaching.

The Rev. David Menzies of Glasgow, who was cordially received by the meeting, then spoke as follows:—

'As the oldest re-unionist present on this interesting occasion, I am glad the managing committee have

allowed me to say a few words at this stage of the proceedings.

'I think there may be a number here who will know me as an old acquaintance in connection with St. Rollox School in days gone by. And I am happy, Mr. Chairman, to find you presiding at this Re-union meeting of old acquaintances of St. Rollox School, as yourself being, in the grateful remembrance of many, one of these old acquaintances, and the estimable representative of the original proprietors of the school, who for long years have given it such liberal and encouraging support, especially as the present elegant buildings testify, in the course of the period of Mr. Donald's incumbency.

'From my long intimacy with Mr. Donald, I believe I know him, as a man and as a teacher, as well as most can do. Generous, conscientious, and trusty, he is unusually ready, with sympathy and consideration, to render seasonable service to others, both by word and deed. He is more patient, and more free from irritable temper, than most, in circumstances when forbearance and charitable construction are rare though valuable virtues. As a teacher, his knowledge—attained and ever progressive—has always been, and doubtless always will be, up to the mark which, in any circumstances, might be required.

'It is good that, in every social department, the supply should be equal to the demand. I believe that, in this case of educational supply, it would greatly gratify Mr. Donald to find the demand not only larger, but rising higher in the quality sought for; and the lecture he gave, the other evening, before the Philosophical Society, I understand, was a good proof that, in his hands and at his disposal, there would always be

abundance of skilful and well digested supply to meet the demand, however high the quality or large the variety and the quantity might be, which, in the progress of a higher intelligence, might come to be valued and looked for.

' And such is the searching and speculative nature of Mr. Donald's mind, that what he knows, in facts and truths, will always be found in him embedded in clear, definite, intelligent principle. This increases greatly his natural facility in communicating, whether to old or young, such precise and distinct ideas on every subject of his teaching, as enable his pupils' minds to take a ready, permanent, and practicable hold of the varied knowledge, whether general or special and practical, they are sent to school to acquire. My long intimacy with Mr. Donald enables me, with full confidence, so to speak of him.

' I dare not detain you, and would only further say that, as a personal friend, I have ever found him exceedingly obliging, trusty, and very valuable; and I cannot but esteem him, with gratitude and affection, as having been, these past years, a very gift of God to me, and to that quarter of the city generally where I have spent now six-and-thirty years.

' I would just say in conclusion, it is well that we should unite and reunite to celebrate the personal and professional worth of our able and estimable friend. But he himself right well knows that wisdom and honour have no vital, abiding reality without the fear of the Lord, which is the beginning of wisdom—that contrite and adoring reverence for the Lord of glory, who is the Alpha and the Omega of all things, and whom truly to know is the solid glory that never fades, and which sheds on the person who is of this

grace taught intelligence, the imperishable lustre of the perfection of beauty, and secures a nobler and lovelier memorial than the most exquisite statuary man could erect, in imparting to the glorified body itself the bloom of a pure, divine, and happy immortality amid the God-serving activities and ever brightening scenes of eternal life.'

Mr. W. A. Gray followed, and said :

' In rising to address you, and, what in other circumstances might be said, to propose the toast of the evening, I do so with not a little hesitation, from the feeling that the position which has devolved upon me—as representative of the former scholars of Mr. Donald—to make this address and present him with a testimonial of their regard, may lead the meeting to anticipate fluency and eloquence which I feel wholly incapable of; but despite this sense of inadequacy on my part, I will not say that some abler person ought to have been chosen, as, however deficient I may be in ability to perform, I yield to none in the will to perform, nor in my interest in and good wishes for our friend and former teacher, and therefore accept the privilege of expressing your sentiments towards the school and the recipient of this testimonial, and good wishes for the continued prosperity of both. I trust that, in my efforts to acquit myself in this task, any shortcomings on my part will meet with your indulgence.'

Having explained the origin of the proposal to present Mr. Donald with a testimonial, Mr. Gray proceeded : ' Allow me in a few words to state how our proposal has been received. Acting as secretary, I have had communications from several gentlemen formerly connected with the school, quotations from a few of which will, I think, prove interesting. In

one letter received from a son of the Rev. Alexander Leck, he states that owing to the very bad state of his father's health, the latter is unable to be present, a circumstance he more regrets, seeing that our meeting is in connection with a school and district with both of which, as a teacher and minister, he was so long and intimately associated. In another letter the writer says, that "the proposed testimonial must commend itself to all former pupils, as Mr. Donald in his work has been a boon to the locality and so to the city." A third writer states: "I think such a Re-union most desirable, and that it will be very agreeable;"—and in a letter from an influential member of the Philosophical Society of Glasgow, the writer states: "I am not ignorant of the deservedly high character of the school, and the attainments of its excellent teacher. . . . I wish you a successful meeting."

'We hail with satisfaction that our efforts have been in the right direction evidenced, we think, by the fact that we have with us this evening gentlemen whose presence we construe not, we hope, unwarrantably into concurrence with our action; that we have a gentleman presiding over our assembly who has devoted so much of his time and labour for our special educational advantage, and also in our presence our old and revered friend the Rev. Mr. Menzies.

'It will not, I am sure, be expected of me to offer any explanation as to the grounds upon which the proposal to present Mr. Donald with a testimonial is based. Unacquaintance with these grounds would almost imply unacquaintance with the district where he has laboured so long, so faithfully, and so successfully. I feel confident that every one resident in St. Rollox will be ready to own the fidelity and conscienc-

tious manner with which he has prosecuted his profession ; and as to his success, we have only to look back to the days of the old school in Castle Street, and at the present school in Garngad Road, to mark the contrast—the result of his unwearied efforts. Mr. Donald's labours have been so successful, that from the time he was installed as teacher in St. Rollox School to the present hour, his efforts have been crowned with almost unexampled prosperity. It is not necessary to make any derogatory references to other teachers in order to establish Mr. Donald's claim to an honourable position in his profession ; but it is to be feared that the quality of originality in their methods of imparting instruction does not obtain so largely with teachers, as a body, as it might possibly do, with more advantage to all concerned. Now it is this quality of originality which constitutes not the least distinctive feature of Mr. Donald's system. This peculiarity is exemplified particularly in his method of teaching arithmetic, a method which has, so far as it could be done through such a medium, now been imparted to the educational world in his published treatises.

' Another feature of Mr. Donald's system is its simplicity, whereby, like a true master, he hides his art within art. As one who has profited by his training, I say without hesitation that his study has always been how simply and easily he could educate and instruct the young mind. His care has ever been to eschew laboured and elaborate lessons, and that more especially in that most requisite, but difficult, branch of our education, to wit, arithmetic. The results of this care and system have, on every examination of the scholars—either Governmental or

otherwise — been described as very gratifying and surprising.

‘ Our good teacher has also sought the wider, if not higher, sphere of authorship in the manuals of arithmetic I have already referred to. In a difficult subject like arithmetic, time is required to bring a just conception of the merits of an author cultivating this walk; but whatever may be the verdict of the scholastic world on his written works, I cannot but remark that no small credit is due to any one, such as Mr. Donald, who, although having his hands full of labour brought him by his regular and arduous avocation, denies flesh and blood their needful rest and repose, and for the sake of his generation and posterity “ trims the midnight lamp ” in preparing literary food and nourishment of the most wholesome, bracing kind.

‘ We are able to claim among his former pupils gentlemen holding civil appointments, lawyers, surgeons, clergymen, and not a few who hold good positions in the commercial world. To the list should also be added even poets, as our friend who read to-night his sketch of “ The Old School and its Notabilities ” proves; and authorship of the following stanza which I quote as appropriate to this occasion is not unknown to some of us :—

‘ It needs no poet’s verse to tell
How often blend their joy and woe,
What mingling thoughts their bosoms swell,
When meet the friends of long ago.’¹

¹ The author.

At the desire of several friends, the poem, which appeared in the *Scotsman*, April 29, 1871, is given here entire :—

‘ Several others have crossed the Atlantic, some have gone to Africa, others to the United States and Canada to seek their fortunes there, and, I am pleased to add, occupy very good positions in their adopted countries. If it is wished to have a fair sample of the general abilities of the scholars, there is one here to-night (Mr. James Anderson) to whose indefatigable and energetic efforts we are greatly indebted for seeing so many old faces to-night.

‘ I mention these, ladies and gentlemen, not in boasting, but rather by way of showing some fruit of Mr. Donald’s labours ; and in the names of these and other former pupils, it is now my pleasure to request of you, Mr. Donald, to accept this gold watch and appendages as a small expression of their esteem and regard towards you.

‘ It was felt that a serious oversight of the claims of

‘ HI, CALLER OO ! ’

WHEN kindly eve her mantle spreads
 In shadows o’er the city wide,
 Round troubled breasts and aching heads,
 Be calming then the human tide—
 Stealing along the silent streets
 This tuneful cry my ear oft greets,
 Each call awak’ning pleasure new—
 ‘ Hi, caller oo ! ’

It needs no poet’s verse to tell
 How often blend their joy and woe,
 What mingling thoughts their bosoms swell,
 When meet the friends of long ago.
 And thus I feel a half alloy
 Of sorrow blending with my joy,
 Whene’er I hear this cry anew,
 ‘ Hi, caller oo ! ’

For like a relic of the past,
 Of friends and hopes that once were mine,

one near and dear to you, and an old friend to us (especially on many occasions as "a friend in court"), would be made were we to omit your good lady in this recognition. I beg therefore to hand you, for Mrs. Donald, this brooch for her kind acceptance.

'I express the contributors' sentiments, and my own, when I hope that you may be long spared to each other in health and strength and happiness, and that in your respective spheres you may be enabled, as hitherto, to exemplify those traits of character which have commanded the esteem and regard of all with whom you have been brought into contact.

'Permit me to add, that to gauge our sentiments by the intrinsic value of this testimonial would indeed give but an inadequate conception of these sentiments; but however imperfect the sign, the sentiments signified

It brings in joy with sadness cast
The memories of 'auld lang syne.'
Calling from out my heart its dead,
Of friendships lost and pleasures fled,
Since first its silv'ry voice I knew—
‘Hi, caller oo !’

With soothing sympathy it falls,
And stills the yearning of my breast;
For aye its wistful strain recalls
The ocean's ceaseless, great unrest,
Whose surgings ever bring to me
A deep and soft serenity—
I welcome then with pleasure true,
‘Hi, caller oo !’

Oh ! half the thoughts I cannot tell
Which this clear cry awakes,
When, cadence like, its dying swell
Upon my ear at ev'ning breaks.
But if like me you love to hear
Its thrilling accents greet your ear,
May vesper breeze oft waft to you,
‘Hi, caller oo !’

are none the less true, of none the less value, for—

“ True hearts are more than coronets,
Simple faith than Norman blood.”

In responding, Mr. Donald, in the course of his remarks, said : ‘ I presume it is altogether unnecessary for me to say to a meeting constituted such as this one is, that whatever my *forte* may be, it certainly is not public speaking. There are one or other of two conditions generally necessary to be present to my mind in order to enable me to speak successfully—that is, successfully as compared with the standard of myself. These conditions are either, first, that in speaking I am in the act of combating the statements of some previous speaker ; or, second, that when speaking I have in view the immediate prospect of my own statements being combated by some one else.

‘ Now to-night, unfortunately for my chances of appearing to any advantage as a public speaker, neither of these conditions are present ; for however much I may feel that the speakers who have gone before me were all too generous and flattering in their references to me, I also feel that it is not for me, at any rate, to dispute these statements ; and I think there is little prospect of anything I am likely now to say being called in question by any one here, so that really my trade as, in a sense, a disputant is gone for the time being, and, speaking metaphorically, I am left without a leg to stand upon.

‘ But although left in this otherwise unpleasant predicament, my lips are not closed to the gracious duty of expressing my sincere thanks, which I now beg to do, for the handsome testimonial just presented through our friend Mr. Gray. I cannot say that in respect of this testimonial I am, at this moment, altogether taken

by surprise ; but this I can say, that reflecting on the conception of the idea of presenting me with such a testimonial, I have indeed frequently felt surprised. I must own that in my seasons of fond anticipations, which most people experience, I presume, as well as myself, I have looked forward to the time when not a few of my former pupils, under the mellowing and clarifying influences of time, and forgetting or viewing in their proper light the little unpleasantnesses which are, I fear, almost necessarily incidental to school life wherever the discipline is at all firm, would recognise perhaps more fully and justly the traits of my temperament and character generally, and gather round me as in our meeting to-night, or in some such similar form.

‘ The presence before me of so many of my former pupils—now arrived at full manhood and womanhood—is, I think, proof that my anticipations in this respect have not been wholly without foundation, and the pleasing aspect of this reflection is of course enhanced by the peculiar circumstances under which we are met.

‘ School discipline has at all times been esteemed a legitimate subject for witticisms and burlesque. It also is the frequent occasion, unfortunately, of bringing to those who administer it not a little misunderstanding or positive displeasure. I suppose that in my capacity as teacher of a public school, my acts in this way have received a fair share of criticism, and called into existence the usual amounts of pleasantry and unpleasantry. Frank and free criticism can do harm at no time, but rather good at most times, and I would not seek to stifle its expression on any subject proper to be brought under it, much less to stifle its voice concerning any public act of my own. Reference has

been made by Mr. Gray to my discipline, in an incidental manner, in his address where he mentions "a friend in court." I need not say I have no intention of upholding my discipline, here or anywhere else, for the simple reason that I do not feel that it needs any upholding or defence. I rather make these references in continuation of my allusion to the failure, in most instances, of school-boys and girls to gauge accurately the characters of their teachers, and the necessity of maturer years being reached before even an approximately just estimate of their teachers can be formed.

'The reference I have mentioned as made by our friend Mr. Gray appears to imply, to some extent at least, such an inadequate realization of my own character. For the pupils of St. Rollox School have at all times had, in the matter of my administration of discipline, a much more powerful friend in court than the one he has kindly mentioned. Who that friend is and was will readily be understood, when I say that often and often, again and again, when I have reflected on the probability of some boy or girl's negligence making discipline unavoidably necessary, the painful anticipation has been the source of much sorrowful solicitude and anxiety.

'In a more pleasing acceptation of the term Mrs. Donald has been "a friend in court" to me also. Her assistance to me in school before her final retirement from it was very material, and then and since in labours beyond the sphere of school work her positive help in, or intelligent appreciation of, my work has to me been invaluable. Humble as my position relatively is, I have in this connection sometimes compared myself with a celebrated divine, and again with an eminent savant of a past generation, and the comparison has

shown cause for me feeling deeply grateful for the boon of her society.

' I would again thank you most sincerely for the useful presentation you have given Mrs. Donald and myself. For both of us I may say that we appreciate them at once for their intrinsic value, and much more for the feelings which their presentation points to. When one comes looking for nothing and finds it, there is no room for disappointment; but when in looking for nothing one finds something very appreciable and indicative of kindly sentiments, there is much reason for thankfulness. The latter is our case, and it therefore only becomes me, in concluding, to reiterate our thanks.'

In moving a vote of thanks to the Chairman, Mr. Thomas Duncanson, Kilmarnock, said :

' Permit me to express to you the very great pleasure I have had in being present at our Re-union here to-night.

' The sight of old faces, and the music of familiar voices of old friends, call up many pleasant recollections. Meetings like the present prove that the friends of youth are united by ties which distance cannot break and time cannot destroy. Without exaggeration or undue warmth of language, I may say truly that I never enjoyed myself better at any soiree; indeed, I could come in from Kilmarnock to-morrow evening to spend such another night as this. And judging from the hearty laughter and joyful looks of those around me, I am certain that all have enjoyed themselves to the full, in common with myself.

' The feature of the evening has, of course, been the presentation to Mr. and Mrs. Donald. Allow me in a few words to add my sincere though humble testimony

to the worthiness of Mr. Donald to receive this token as an expression, however inadequate, of regard from his former pupils. The benefits we as such have derived from his instructions are beyond the value of gold—it but feebly shadows forth our sense of gratitude. And above all, the many useful lessons which he taught us will ever tower, boldly and prominently, in our estimation those lofty precepts which he inculcated with peculiar force, and exemplified in his own life, upright and consistent, and which cannot be more fitly expressed than in the words of the late Dr. Norman M'Leod,—

“‘Trust in God and do the right.’”

‘Our meeting this evening has been honoured by the presence of a gentleman widely known, and as universally esteemed. I refer to our Chairman, Mr. Galbraith. In private life he is amiable and kind; in business life he is noted for his punctuality, industry, and integrity; and in public life he has always been distinguished for his open heart and liberal hand. As you are all aware, he has long taken a great interest in St. Rollox School, for which he was correspondent with Government till it was acquired by the School Board of Glasgow.

‘Messrs. Charles Tennant & Co. must have spent several thousand pounds in building and maintenance of the school, an institution which is a credit to the district in more ways than one. The Townhead people therefore owe a debt of gratitude to the Messrs. Tennant, and to Mr. Galbraith personally, for the active interest taken by them in the education and consequent elevation of the rising generation.

‘As our Chairman this evening, Mr. Galbraith has

proved himself to be the right man in the right place. As a skilful captain he has guided us through the storms of *encores* to the end of the programme. I have therefore much pleasure in now proposing a very hearty vote of thanks to him for his conduct in the chair, to wish him long life and happiness, and the continuation of that prosperity which has hitherto followed his honourable career.'

POETICAL SKETCH
OF
THE OLD SCHOOL AND ITS NOTABILITIES,
BY
HUGH AITKEN DOW;

READ BY HIM AT THE RE-UNION FESTIVAL OF THE FORMER
PUPILS OF ST. ROLLOX SCHOOL,
IN THE ASSEMBLY ROOMS, BATH STREET, GLASGOW, ON THE EVENING
OF TUESDAY, 16TH FEBRUARY 1875.

‘ My eyes are dim with childish tears,
 My heart is idly stirr’d ;
For the same sound is in my ears
 Which in those days I heard.

‘ Thus fares it still in our decay :
 And yet the wiser mind
Mourns less for what age takes away,
 Than what it leaves behind.’

—*The Fountain.* By WORDSWORTH.



THE OLD SCHOOL AND ITS NOTABILITIES.

This sketch relates only to St. Rollox School in Castle Street, and the Notabilities thereof.

HOW oft we hear the deep-drawn sigh,
Breath'd midst of toil, and care, and woe,
For childhood's days for aye gone by,
The happy days of long ago !

And though the wish is idle all—
For ne'er again may come our youth—
Sad hearts are soothed as they recall
Those days of joy, and hope, and truth.

How oft we hear men fondly long,
When struggling 'neath life's heat and blaze,
Sore battling 'midst its crush and throng,
For some bright hours of school-boy days !

Methinks their fainting hearts behold,
When thus they fondly long and sigh,
A stately pile 'mid tall trees old,
Its belfry tow'ring 'gainst the sky.

Long spacious halls, where teachers stand
 In silken togas—grave and sage ;
 Playgrounds, where lounge the rich and grand,
 And fag their mates of gentler age.

Soft rustling woods, whose whisp'ring leaves
 Shimmer all in gold and sheen,—
 Blithe Prattling streams, whose silv'ry waves
 Reflect a canopy of green.

Cool, verdant glades, where children play
 And fill the air with laughter clear,
 Exulting in youth's cloudless day,
 Unwitting of life's woe or fear.

Such is the scholarly retreat
 In airy fancy then I raise,
 Whene'er my ear it sadly greets,
 This weary sigh for school-boy days.

But when the wish is yours or mine,
 Dear friends of old St. Rollox days,
 When we recall our 'auld lang syne'
 By mem'ry bathed in orient rays ;

Methinks a humbler scene appears,—
 And if, by leave, my hand portrays
 The place we knew in bygone years,
 This is the scene of our school days.

A busy, noisy, clam'rous spot,
 Where trees, nor flow'rs, nor fields are seen ;
 Where men by day and night are wrought,
 And holy calm hath rarely been.

Where fragrant zephyrs never blow,
But smutty is its atmosphere—
When rains fall dense and winds are low,
Its sulph'rous elements¹ appear.

When winds blow south, a cloud by day
It may at once be seen and felt,
For smarting eyes then own its sway,
Through muffled noses then 'tis smelt.

There fiery pillars gleam at night
From hooded chimneys tow'ring high,
And cast their vivid, fork'd flames bright
Up to the troubled, murky sky.

Thus, fiery cross like, shineth clear
The cupolas of Charles Street,
Answering to M'Andrew's near,
While Hamiltons' the call repeat.

There Vulcan's strokes would fail to match
The Glasgow Ironworks' polka blows ;
His lurid fires would pale and dim
'Fore Tennants' countless furnace glows.

The thronged canal,² where gabbarts wind,
Spanned broadly by a massive bridge,—
The long high wall with windows blind,
A colonnade upon its ridge ;

¹ From the works of Messrs. Charles Tennant & Co. One effect of this element in the atmosphere, when of the kind indicated, is to discolour badly the silver plate in jewellers and others' premises for miles around.

² Forth and Clyde Canal.

And then—all unpretentious, plain,
 The school where we in youth were taught :
 Strange memories now crowd my brain,
 O'er this fond theme, with sadness fraught !

I see again the busy rooms,
 I hear again my schoolmates' hum ;
 Like spectres, conjured from their tombs
 By some weird hand, in crowds they come !

Again I hear the gleeful voice,
 Again I mark the merry eye ;
 The strains that made our hearts rejoice
 In symphony again float by.

I see again, as clearly now
 As then—ere we marked youth's fast flow—
 Ere time's firm hand had swept each brow,—
 Our school of twenty years ago !

Three time-stained rooms, their walls begrimed
 With ink and dust, the hoards of years ;
 Their ceilings veined with long-drawn rents,
 In menace to our heads and ears.

The smallest room¹ of all the three
 We thought a cosy little den,—
 Used as the fruitful nurserie
 For our 'fair women and brave men.'

It had a flight of wooden steps,
 Reaching almost to the ceiling ;

¹ In this room the alphabet and first combinations of letters were taught.

So big they were for our short legs,
They oft were climbed on all four kneeling.

That little place was also used
As durance vile, but thus, at best,
A treacherous ally proved ; when sought,
The caged birds were oft *non est* !

The secret was, a coping-stone
Led o'er the door that stood beneath,
And, dropping this, we stood once more
Unbound upon our native heath.¹

The next-sized room was farthest north,
Where birchy's first free taps were caught ;
And then—the Atheneum grand,
Where most of us our ken were taught.

We had no desks on iron stands,
Nor maps festooned around the wall ;
One great large map, seen looking south,
Did duty, and that well, for all.

And for the desks,—though large and strong,—
A breath, a touch, their legs might tilt,
And often did, when, lo ! the hash
Of broken slates, and ink-stands spilt !

At this late hour my mind can trace
The look of puzzled, vexed dismay

¹ Although the author never was guilty of this escapade, nor saw it effected, he was told frequently of such having been done by several of his fellow-pupils, who seemed rather proud of the achievement.—*Vide page 61.*

That sat upon our teacher's face,
O'er such a swimming, black array.

I need not stay to picture all,
The old rooms' features to repeat,—
The vitriol vats that steamed below,¹
The break-neck stair down to the street.²

No glowing, rosy tints, forsooth !
But yet a silv'ry streak and fair
I must throw in, to paint with truth
The story of our school-days there.

We had our gala, golden days,
Our times of boisterous, gleesome mirth ;
Ling'ringly the hand portrays
The scenes which gave such blithe times birth.

Foreground upon the canvas stands
A spectacle, unwonted there,
Of boys and girls all in their grands,
With faces clean and smooth-combed hair.

'Examination day' it is,
And, midst a coterie of friends,³

¹ This is a literal fact.

² This stair consisted of a single flight of about two dozen steps, and was very steep. Once, in descending, the author accidentally missed a step, and, in consequence, came down the remainder in a precipitous manner. Unable to pull himself up, he bolted straight across the street, narrowly brushing past a lorry going north, and only falling at the foundry gate opposite.

³ The Rev. Mr. Menzies related to us, that the first time he met Mr. John Tennant of St. Rollox was on one of these examination days, when, on entering the new school, he found Mr. Tennant engaged hearing the senior class a Bible lesson.

A snowy-haired and kindly man
The heap of glittering books¹ attends.

'Tis good old Menzies,² trumpet-toned
His voice, in cadences and swells,
Who deals the prizes, curtly own'd,
The merits of each victor tells.

Beside him, black-hair'd, trim, and nice,
Stands one whose lisping words proclaim,
As speaks he trite words of advice,
The well-remembered Thomas Graham.³

George Anderson, our third M.P.,
Of massive build and bearing bold,
A silent, watchful man stands he,
His warm thoughts veiled by aspect cold.

Another picture, see, there is,
The largest room is darkened all,—
A magic lantern throws its rays
Of rubied pictures on the wall :

Upon his bed a man is stretched,
His bearded mouth is open wide,—
See ! cautious rats go popping in,
While legions creep up by his side :

A country clown is being shaved,
The barber cuts his hirsute guzzle,—

¹ Prizes.

² Rev. David Menzies, of Free Martyrs Church, Stanhope Street, Glasgow.

³ Rev. Thomas Graham (Mr. Leck's successor), Martyrs Church (Established), Parliamentary Road, Glasgow.

A donkey throws a youth depraved,
Then last,—the Rob Roy Chinese puzzle.

Fulton's Orrery ! (fitting name
To put within a rhymster's mouth)—
Where balls of brass showed orbs of flame,
Thus beamed the bright Star of the South !

' You oft have seen, my children dear,
Brass balls iron rods thus fixed on ?'
' Oh, yes ! ' a tiny voice pipes clear,
' The three brass balls above the pawn ! '

Another scene :—a group of boys
In glee round Tennants' chimney stand,
And hats and caps send up its vent
To the smoky realms of cloud-land.

Problem more stiff than Euclid's worst :
Send up a cap, four fifty feet high,—¹

¹ The works of Messrs. Charles Tennant & Co., at St. Rollox, on the banks of the Canal, are understood to be the greatest of the kind in the world, covering many acres of ground. The great chimney was erected in 1842, and its measurements are as follows :—

OUTER CONE.						Ft.	In.
Total height from foundation,	.	.	.	.	.	455	6
From surface to top of cope,	.	.	.	.	.	435	6
Outside diameter at foundation,	.	.	.	.	.	50	0
Do. do. surface,	.	.	.	.	.	40	0
Do. do. top of cope,	.	.	.	.	.	13	6

INNER CONE.						Ft.	In.
Total height from foundation,	.	.	.	.	.	263	0
From surface to top of cope,	.	.	.	.	.	243	0
Inside diameter at foundation,	.	.	.	.	.	12	0
Do. do. top of cope,	.	.	.	.	.	13	6

—*Glasghu Facies.*

Where Steeple Jack's foot alone might durst,—
Where was the cap thus likely to fly ?

Proud Cambridge's senior wrangler
Ne'er beam'd with more pleasure or hope,
Than we, when the soot-stain'd trav'ller
Returned to our arms like a mop.

Another scene, real, sad, yet brave,
Still clear and vivid to us all,—
A soldier carried to his grave,
While sounds the weird 'Dead March in Saul.'¹

A final scene, which often fills
My heart with grief, my eyes with tears,
And still my frame with tremor thrills,
As then I felt in childhood's years :

Ambulances, gory and dread—
Filled with the maimed, bleeding, and crushed ;
Parents bearing their children dead,
Tenderly, as if in sleep hushed !

That morning bright, who shall forget ?
So balmy and warm, quiet and clear—
Contrast strange to the scenes we met,
Of anguish and death, pain and fear.²

Oh ! I could tell—were this the place—
Long, prattling tales of these old times,

¹ We once had half a holiday (an afternoon) to see this funeral.

² This has reference to a collision which happened shortly before or after the year 1850, on the Caledonian Railway. A stair led down from the railway to Springburn Road, a little north of our school, and

That fill—as sayeth one with grace—
 My mind ‘like some old poet’s rhymes.’¹

I add no more, but quit the scene
 Where morbid silence reigns and palls ;
 The rooms are hush’d, deserted now,
 And ‘Ichabod’ is on their walls.

• • • •

Such is the school of our young days ;
 And now, a word of those of yore,
 Who shared our pranks, our games, our plays,
 In youth’s bright times—to come no more !

And if I mention, here and there,
 Some friends who sit with us to-night,
 May I bespeak a hearing fair
 To words that mean no harm or slight ?

How thickly crowding now they come
 From out my mem’ries of that time !
 At random I will mention some,
 As best will suit my vagrant rhyme.

Nicholas Nicholson,² who stood,
 For height and weight, a little Saul ;
 Then later on, Horne, stouter still,
 Lame, burly, and so kind withal.

the wounded and dead passengers were brought down this stair and past the school in being carried to the Infirmary.

¹ Longfellow.

² This formidable name was but rarely applied to its owner, who was content to pass through his school life under the *sobriquet* of ‘ Nickety Cod ! ’

Sweet, stirring strains he often woke
From the harmonium we had there,—¹
St. Neot's, French, and Orlington,
Evan's plaintive, pleading air.²

And keeping still to our fat mates,
There's Rankin and his sisters two ;
Right well I recollect the huge,
Large-text, cart-wheel strokes he drew.

The last of this class I shall name,
Embonpoint, as they're styled in French,
Is one I'm not quite sure to claim
Is right here, namely, Mary Blench.

Mary Friar, sedate and grave,
Who bore from all our wistful eyes
A pencil-case of lustrous gold,
The first and keenly fought for prize.

E'en now I see our teacher pass,
The trinket in his hand held high,
From room to room, from class to class,
To show 'what could be won by "try."'

Thomas Duncanson, one whose name
Recalls the picture of a boy
In whom all gentle graces came
To give a friend—his playmates' joy.

¹ This was on Saturdays, when there was no schooling.

² These tunes were favourites, for which reason, and probably also on account of his limited *repertoire*, they were frequently used by Mr. Donald.

The Old School

ugh he rarely joined our sports,
 part played with us all the same,—
 d kind, fond mem'ry courts
 picture conjured by his name.

There's George Buchanan, William, John,
 Agnes, Mary, mayhap Sarah too—
 The last named was a cosy wife
 Before St. Rollox life I knew.

And here 'tis meet that I should tell,
 'Twere better still their loves were sung,
 Of Mary, Agnes' union well
 With James Crawford and James Young.¹

How little thought they,—schoolmates then,
 And playmates at life's opening day,—
 They'd walk its paths through hand in hand,
 'Together totter doun its brae.'

Robert Hunter, grim, tall, and lank,
 Eager to rise above the crowd ;
 Brave battling e'en while life's worst foes
 His sunny head in sadness bowed.²

The cypress droopeth o'er his grave,
 For Sighthill³ finds his lowly bed ;
 Sweet be his sleep, where willows wave,
 And mark the City of the Dead !

¹ These are not the only cases in point of this kind. Mary Cameron was espoused to Douglas Hunter, and we understand there were more such unions.

² He died of a lingering consumption, brought on by a cold.

³ Sighthill Cemetery, Springburn, Glasgow.

George Patrick, trim, and neat, and firm ;
Bella Murray, and Flora Barr ;
David Doig,¹ so tall and slim ;
The Balfours, Calder, Simpson, Carr.

Mary Ann Hall, stout, florid, fresh,
With ‘eyes that shed delicious death,’
As knew Sam Cameron—to whom
Sweet music was her every breath.

Fond, loving Sam ! I can’t forbear
To drop a tribute to the mate
Who led the way in our *amours*—
Bold, stout-hearted, and yet so blate.

His name suggests a long list more
Of that ilk, with their martial crest,—²
Agnes, William, Murdoch, Allan,
All hale limb’d and Orpheus blest.

James Thomson, John Sutherland,
Andersons, Frasers, and the Gows ;
The Browns, the Whites, the Blacks, the Reids,
The Blairs, George Willock, and the Bows ;

The Bryces, Turners, Thoms, and Dicks,
The Carsons, Clellands not a few ;
M’Kinnons, Gilchrists, and the Galls,
The Crows, the Dows, yea, Peacocks too !

¹ When this boy was on the eve of leaving school, Mr. Donald, taking for his text the proverb, ‘Far off fowls have fine feathers,’ gave a touching valedictory address in publicly bidding David goodbye. It was understood that he was about to leave for Australia.

² ‘The Camerons never can yield.’

Then come the Wilsons and the Grants,
 The Sloans, the Cowans, and the Grays.
 Here I must pause, but ere I pass,
 Permit me just a word of praise

To Douglas Hunter,¹ William Gray,²
 Old schoolmates both, and playmates too,
 To whom, in this our festival,
 Our cordial, kindly thanks are due.

On this glad night, while here we meet,
 How spread these are the wide world o'er !
 How severed in life's race and heat,
 How parted now these friends of yore !

Where are they all, in life's drear way ?
 How fares it with these friends to-night ?
 None may tell,—but if love essay
 To follow them in fancy's flight,

New Zealand finds its wings a rest,
 Australia's vast and virgin land,
 America's broad, kindly breast,
 And India's arid, burning sand—

In these, and more, it finds some friends,
 Our playmates of long, long ago ;
 The grave also its call attends
 For those asleep in robes of snow.

But whether here, or o'er the seas,
 In city dense, or prairie wide—

Treasurer of the Re-union Festival Committee.—*Vide p. 149.*

¹ Secretary of the Re-union Festival Committee.—*Vide p. 149.*

We pray it may Jehovah please
Heav'nward their steps through all to guide.

'Tis fitting I should speak a word
Of other friends, to us then known ;
Miss Nicholl, to begin my list,
Whom mem'ry paints a maid full blown.

Stout and matron-like, winning, quiet,
With mild grey eyes and placid brow,
Soft-toned in voice, her bearing meek—
Such is her image to me now.

Greenlees, with eager, kindly look,
And sparkling, rapid-running talk ;
M'Callum,¹ with his merry face,
And patronizing, pompous walk.

Our chairman² here, reserved and grave,
But still we rogues could well perceive
His air the mask his country gave
To hide the heart upon his sleeve.

Willie Telfer, crouse, shaggy-brow'd,
Who did the honours of the gate,
And kindly shelter gave us oft
When rains fell fast, and school seem'd late.

Best known perhaps of all I've named,
Butt of our sport, was Keek-um-funny !

¹ Of Free St. Peter's School ; the schoolmaster with whom Mr. Donald served his apprenticeship.

² Wm. Galbraith, Esq., of Messrs. Charles Tennant & Co., Glasgow.

Short-sighted, grey, and stiff, he seemed
 A vet'ran living on his money.

No doubt he's paid the penalty
 Exacted from our mortal race :
 Pray his walks now no torments mar,
 Ye victims of his angry chase !

And now, ere closing, may I not
 Speak here a word of one whose name
 To you and me is richly fraught
 With all that deep respect should claim ?

Mark yon slight form, erect and bold,
 Yet plainly doing battle brave
 With sickness and the strange world cold :—
 His eye is lit, his aspect grave ;

See, tippet-style he wears a plaid,
 Arms firmly down, first fingers shown,—
 Dear schoolmates ! needs it more be said
 To make our good schoolmaster known ?

'Twere not meet here, e'en had I skill,
 To speak his worth ; but, free from strife,
 And holding him our teacher still,
 I'll speak the lesson of his life :—

THE LESSON.

Hold head erect, eyes front and frank !

Let motives all be pure and high ;

Loose to the world, in no man's thank,

The truth speak out, and scorn a lie !

Yet ever dumb to scandal's tale—

To aught that ne'er should be revealed—

Where Charity's sweet accents fail,

Oh ! there let lip and heart be seal'd !

The helping hand, the cheering word,

Extend to all as best we may ;

Let no pure page of life be blurred

By aught we think, or do, or say.

Though languor clog, and sickness pall,

All resolute, strive onward still !

On to the goal where duty calls,

Ne'er fails the way where leads the will !

If success mark and crown our work,

In grateful meekness be it worn ;

But should we fail, ne'er let us shirk

The burden giv'n us to be borne.

Our labours *here*, our laurels *there* :

Come trophies, failure, or what may,—

Life's heavy cross in woe to bear,

Or plaudits of our passing day.

As marks the mariner at night
Yon softly beaming, vigil star,
His light and guide, in radiance bright,
O'er waters dark from realms afar.

Thus, stedfast, press we to our goal,
Nor success rashly mark or ask,—
Content to leave the issues all
In His kind hand who gives the task.



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